"Where there is no vision the people perish"

THE POETRY REVIEW

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Poetry

THE COMTESSE DE DIE

RACHEL ANNAND TAYLOR

Five songs sang the Comtesse de Die,
Of love not to be hidden,
Of pride not to be chidden.
Peer to peer, and prince to prince,
As hardly a woman has ventured since,
Body to body, soul to soul
She spake, and brake her sweet citole.
Naked as holy flame sang she:
Five songs found the Comtesse de Die.

Five songs sang the Comtesse de Die,
Crying aloud to her lover,
Winging like eagles over
That world of subtile troubadours,
Moon-bows, white peacocks, and Fins Amours.
Five dark rubies to crown her aright,
Five red wounds on her body white!
In the dusk of time defiant she:
Five songs found the Comtesse de Die.

THE SNOWMAN

WILFRID GIBSON

She made a little man of snow
And set it on the windowsill,
And watched it slowly melt and spill
Into a muddy pool below;
Praying that he who'd left her lone
Should likewise dwine in strength until
Nothing of him was left to know
Save only his cold heart of stone.

FAERY STORY SONG FOR JUNE

FRANCES CORNFORD

Grandly grows
The crimson rose,
Like the crimson curtains seen
Looped around a King or Queen.
Grand as well
The Canterbury bell,
Like the gowns Princesses wear
With their yellow, yellow hair.

THE ADVERSARIES

WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR

Dear heart, how is it that we strive
To bruise love's image night and day;
We, who were glad to be alive
To sing the joy we could not say?

So shaped his thought and hers who bent
Close to the task of daily bread,
But in their coil of discontent
The thought was stillborn, never said.

Anger and pride crushed love to death;
They mourned, but gave no mutual sign,
Stifling their springtide with each breath,
Denying what was once divine.

COMEDY IN THREE KISSES

(From Rimbaud)

E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

She was unrobed exceeding much
And big trees, indiscreetly clear,
Flung on the panes their leafy touch
Mischievously, quite near, quite near.

She sat, as half her dress she wore,
Clasping her hands, on my big chair.
Joyously quivered on the floor
Her little feet, so rare, so rare.

One smallest ray I watched awhile,
Of waxen hue, a hedgerow guest,
A-butterflying in her smile—
Gnat by a rose—and on her breast.

I kissed her ankles—ah, how fine!
She had a long laugh, very ill,
A cachinnation crystalline
That ran off in clear trill on trill.

The little feet beneath the smock
Vanished. 'You wish to end with me?'
Suffered the first presumption's shock,
The laugh but feigned the penalty.

Poor tiny mites at my lip's press,
Her eyes I kissed with gentle will.
She flung that head of roguishness
Backward: 'Oh! This is better still!'

'I have two words to tell you, Sir . . . '
I flung the remnant in her breast—
A kiss that drew a laugh from her,
An honest laugh that meant the best.

She was unrobed exceeding much
And big trees, indiscreetly clear,
Leant on the panes their leafy touch
Mischievously, quite near, quite near.

ZEPHYRUS

WILFRED CHILDE

Now through the empty house the Blue Wind comes,
  Breathing of upland fields golden with flowers,
Where round the clover-heads the night bee hums,
  And the skies dream for infinite winged hours.

It smells too of the long white sunbathed sands
  And the salt whispers of the dreaming sea;
The incantation of its fragrant hands
  Is as the harp of Ariel to me.

Now are my house's windows opened wide
  To the four Spirits of the summer day,
The flowers, the skies, the sands, the shining tide,
  And they have washed my brooding cares away.

TWINS

ADELAIDE EDEN PHILLPOTTS

Sprung from two seeds by parent elm tree shed
The year Napoleon died,
They rooted in the same soft, loamy bed
And sprouted side by side,
By common springs and soil and showers fed,
Until, pale green and wide,
On self same day their first young leaves outspread.

Grandly they grew, and ten years later stood
Full thirty feet above
The meadow. Fine of stature, stout of wood,
Superb in foliage, they throve;
And to their elmy nature life was good.
Already now they strove
Against the storm with force and hardihood.

A hundred years elapse. Still they endure!
Within their sea of shade
The cattle rested, and aloft, secure,
Loud rooks rough cradles made;
While, tempted by the primitive allure
Of boughs, gay children played
Like monkeys in their splendid armature.

Time presses on and on . . . Those oldening trees,
With massive arms enlaced—
In whose dark, leafless filigrees
Against the night sky traced

Would hang Capella and the Pleiades—
By sudden onslaught faced
Of eastern tempest's smiting batteries,
Their branches still embraced,
Yielded, and crashed as one, in still-linked destinies.

ON A DEAD SLAVE-GIRL

(From Damaskios, the Neoplatonist
Byzantine Poet of the Sixth Century A.D.)

Translated by JACK LINDSAY

Ah, Zosima, your soul was always free,
And now your body has gained its liberty.

WINGS

TERESA HOOLEY

Clearer than Life's dull doubts within my heart,
Louder than War's black drums within my brain,
Happy, the titmouse rings, from the pear-tree bough,
His dual-noted bell again, again.

This puny tuft of sapphire saffron feathers,
Lighter than air in the world's gross libra weighed,
Throws to the bitter wind his silver challenge,
With love and trust proclaims the unafraid.

ENEMY AGENT

WRENNE JARMAN

I see him smiling in the dark
  With cloud for hair and stars for eyes—
The Milky Way his shoulder's arc,
  The murmuring leaves his tongue's disguise.

So wild is he of shape and form,
  So old in men's and Nature's ways—
I trace him in a summer storm,
  And in the Giaconda's gaze.

From stone and marble are we mocked,
  And music's silken masks are his,—
But O the glamour of him, frocked
  In noble ideologies!

Fear most his shining immanence
  Where streams of sheerest beauty run—
For lovelier than all dreams of sense
  Was Lucifer, the Morning's Son!

RENAISSANCE

VERNON WATKINS

The wheel is whining now; the stones are pressed
Under the burden of another birth.
Lithe acrobats, on horses two abreast,
Turn the night backwards with the turning Earth.

Between two hemispheres the sand is flowing.
The whip-led horses prance within the tent.
An age is ending like a circus going.
Outside, the gipsies' fires are almost spent.

Suspended lamps, like gems in burial-urns,
Surprise each heart with orbits yet unknown.
Long thought heretical, love's heaven returns,
And every deathbed seems a flying throne.

See, this last night, how close the stars conspire
While every eye must follow his doomed face
Who treads with weights along destruction's wire,
Wielding horizons from his narrow place.

He slips; and instantly the circle reels.
That eunuch squeak of terror, like a bat,
Brings to the clown concussion of great wheels:
He blows up rumour, and then beats it flat.

I know the roads of exile, and I know
Injustice, and the mark of true renown.
The saint rejoices in his overthrow.
With downcast eyes he cannot be cast down.

Through faith all heaven at once is at his beck,
Although the tyrant's foot is on his neck.
The kiss of dust is life to him who feels
Night, and the resurrection of those wheels.

DEADLOCK

PHOEBE HESKETH

Remote and distant as the sundered poles,
They live in two small rooms, ice-fields apart;
And though each one pretends to blended souls
At church and parties, each disloyal heart
Preserves identity in that salt sea
Of matrimony wherein few are joined.
Ocean of flotsam, ever washing up
Old boots and bodies; here are sacred bonds
Made shipwreck on eternity's cold shore
To mock morality for evermore.

They are life's jetsam who once chanced to meet,
Made temporal ties in this unceasing tide,
Sipped love's enduring lifespring, found it sweet,
Yet they could not endure; hope breathed and died.

The course denied the promise of the start;
Sharp rocks impeded when their strength was low,
And sluggard flesh dragged down the striving heart—
Faith struggled to the rescue, and let go.
Now in the tide of life, remorseless, slow,
Love's anchor rusts above its bed of woe.

They call on wisdom to repair the wrong
Fostered by folly, thinking age can give
Renewal of the promise youth made strong—
Love, and the huge capacity to live.

False was their start; now vainly each pursues
Receding joy—in grasping it they lose,
And cannot see how youth's unchanged desire
Burns on—with searching they are blind and old,
And pass love by. Blank ice absorbs the fire
Of two whole lives in death's eternal cold.

THREE TREES

For John Galsworth

RANDALL SWINGLER

Behind my house stand guardians three,
An oak, an ash, and a willow-tree:

An oak for strength, an ash for thought,
A willow to watch my feeling heart.

Forty years long my oak has grown
Rugged and reaching and rude as stone,

As many years my ash has bent
To the smooth winds of argument;

But in between, in autumn yellow,
Weeping leans my broken willow.

THE LAST FREEDOM

D. G. BRIDSON

Beyond the dreams of the sleeper, there is the fugitive
  Stirring of the deeper dream,—
The gathering armies of self-sufficiency,
  The followers whence he came.

Behind the eyes of the watcher alone in the darkness
  Burns the fire
Which silhouettes the shutter of self-renunciation
  Upon desire.

Know, dreamer,—those armies are your own birthright:
  You are the fugitive . . .
Watcher, only within you is the guiding light
  Your fears will not perceive.

Be what you would be. Only the trammel of doubt
  Lies on the old urge . . .
There is no better beacon than the free thought
  Which burns at large.

They, the armies, will not cease to press upon you;
  Their trumpets will not be dumb
Who drive you across the frontier of the last freedom
  On to your true home.

THE WOODLAND TRACK

DOUGLAS GIBSON

Already in one day
The wood has thrown back
Briars to bar my way
Along the narrow track,
And patient spiders spun
Again the webs I broke
In yesterday's bright sun
Catch at my eyes like smoke.

When man has done his worst,
And his ambitions fade
With cities shattered, cursed
By the false gods he made,
This wood will still remain,
The old track overgrown,
Until man comes again
Its peace to make his own.

ON THE GRAVES OF EXILES IN PERSIA

(From Plato)

CLIVE SANSOM

Leaving behind for ever the thundering Aegean
Finding in Ecbatana these midland graves,
We take our farewell of all things Eretrian—
Of Athens, Eubœa, and the encircling waves.

A VARIATION ON WORDSWORTH

G. S. FRASER

Thoughts that do often lie:
too deep for tears
Or vain excuses, lady, of any sort,
Thoughts that do often tear too deep for lies
Too often rasping at my heart resort.

It is the metaphysical scullion mind
Below the accepted failures and forgiven sins
That might, perhaps, induce these living tears,
Peeling off comrades like onion skins:
They only are the smarting of sore eyes.
It is the swaggering master above stairs
Outswears disaster with his tearing lies,
By his eyes' blaze his brilliant doom defined.

Or, indeed, at some abject depth the true tears lie,
In the child that is wild with bellowing rage, being born—
Later by a long tide
His slack skin thrust aside
To a shore where the wave curled
Of the open and wide
Moderately various world
Stings no more with its spray.
To wait for that wave is the war in the peace of our day,
But we find the round of a maze where we looked for rest
And strain, to the want of a wave, the swimmer's breast

And the poised soldier heart to the want of strife.
There is not enough life in our life:
Bricks, books, beer, routine,
And repeating what we mean
Till that becomes habit too.
When shall we know what we knew?
The child cries, having shattered its glass shell,
The round innocent egg of unconscious being.
The man sulks silent, has built up too well
A cell around his seeing.
And yet one shall weep, lady, and know why:
The common crying of our lying kind,
Lurking like lions sulky in their sour lairs:
We all too much presume on our despairs
And each would be the Hamlet in this play.
To me the meanest skirt that blows can give
(Whipping around slim legs on a spring day)
Thoughts that are much too practical for verse
And foolish hopes, that keep me struggling on:
Cast me as Rosencrantz, I'll still rehearse.
Where shall I be, though, in a later time
With all these gentle titillations gone?
These small snatched pleasures build no lofty rhyme.
And crumble not the outer walls of fate:
We have a date with destiny, no doubt,
But miss our destiny to keep a date,
A small date, with the womb that shut us out.

Yet small constructions out of crumbling years
Mean something; yet your skirt against your thighs
Blown, your hand that sought mine in the taxi,
And yet the wanton welcome in your eyes!
Though Fate no doubt is waiting with his axe, I
Cannot regret all this. Though Time has spies,
Such shallow thoughts induce my facile tears:
Weep for the love that fears beneath our lies,
Weep for the lie that loves beneath our fears!

LAMENT FOR HARLEQUIN

PHILIP JOHN STEAD

Harlequin found the party pretty dull,
And yet from him the dull ones drew new life:
Inspired to theft or violence or drinking,
Or vivid passions for the neighbour's wife.

The sword of lath beat on their back and skull,
Delightful folly made them drunk and tall:
They moved in virtue of his will to mischief:
His wit made brilliant monsters of them all.

Harlequin left: and the action was no more.
Only the stupid attitudes remain
Of vulgar statues on a dusty floor,
Which laughter will not stir to life again.

PUNCHINELLO

DAVID MARCUS

I swore I had the perfect one,
The very one, the only one,
The one to love and love me true
For all my livelong days.

But I was wrong and I was left—
Forlorn, dejected, and bereft—
With empty thoughts and heart half-cleft
And wildness in my gaze.

The size of her, the eyes of her,—
But oh the guile and lies of her,
I thought I'd made a prize of her,
I thought I was a king.

But crown was lost, and throne was lost,
And sceptre, sway, and court were lost—
And queen was lost—and there I was,
An ordinary thing.

True, that's all past, it's history;
I've no one now to worry me.
To see me talk and acting free
You'd think I couldn't care.

But sometimes when the night is cold
And half the moon is pale and old,
I build myself a fire of gold,
And sit like this and stare.

THE SHAKESPEARE MYSTERY

(Part Two) by HERBERT CORBY

Shakespeare is supposed to have been employed as a writer of plays: but there are no records that he ever received payment for them, though records of payment to other playwrights are extant. This leads some of the less idolatrous to suppose that the plays were written by some anonymous genius who paid Shakespeare to subject them to his professional criticism and revision. That this could be possible is suggested by Ravenscroft (1678) who writes of "Titus Andronicus" "I have been told by some anciently conversant with the stage that it was not originally his (Shakespeare's) but brought by a private author to be acted and that he only gave some master touches to one or two of the principal parts or characters".

If indeed there were a private author who gave manuscripts to Shakespeare for revision, who could he be? Because of the general culture and alleged knowledge of court behaviour in the plays, it has been insisted that the author must be someone closely associated with the Court: and that noblemen did sometimes write plays is proved by a secret service report which says that William Stanley, Earl of Derby, "was penning comedies for the common plaiers".

Noblemen then, did write plays: and Shakespeare is reported to have doctored plays. Research into his work has proved to some critics that he worked for a while in collaboration with Christopher Marlowe, who at the time of his death was a more successful writer than Shakespeare. Latterly it has been argued that Marlowe is responsible for some of the more striking lines in the early works and indeed Marlowe is becoming larger in the background of Shakespeare's life. In some instances it could be that Shakespeare merely rewrote passages of the popular plays of the day (as has been done in the MS of "Sir Thomas More"), employing his talents on such noble and dramatic situations as appealed to his sense of the theatre, and consequently a number of the plays contain parts by other hands which Shakespeare did not care to alter.

From the disbelief engendered by the suppositious life of Shakespeare, from the undeniable ignorance about his background and education, from the fact that the greatest writer of our country has left no written record of his work, from the very style and manner of the plays, the sceptics have manufactured theories to prove that the writer was one of Queen Elizabeth's courtiers. But their own predilections and their arbitrary choice and interpretation of the evidence lead them towards different heroes.

There are arguments in favour of, individually, the following:

Sir Francis Bacon, Viscount of St. Albans (1561-1626)

Roger Manners, Earl of Rutland (1576-1613)
William Stanley, Earl of Derby (1561-1642)
Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford (1550-1604)

The theory that Shakespeare worked on plays by more than one titled playwright is not popular, and consequently, unless Edward de Vere left several MSS. when he died he would seem to be the least likely, on dates alone, since Chambers places "The Tempest" as 1611-1612. But this difficulty is overcome easily enough by the argument that the dating of the plays is incorrect, or that the latter plays are spurious. Again, if the dates have any value as proof, Rutland is the most probable.

The theories do not necessarily postulate Shakespeare as a sort of middleman who handled the plays written by another and published them under his own name: most of them in fact treat William Shakespeare as a nonentity whose name was used to cover another's identity, though the reasons put forward for the choice of name and person are singularly inept. The question as to why the plays were not issued under the name of a known playwright (Jonson, Dekker, Nash, Kyd, Greene, Chapman, Marlowe) does not seem to have bothered the theorists.

An example of how the various interpreters read the same evidence is seen when they attempt to discover the source from which "Twelfth Night" was taken. Woodward (for Bacon) says that it was taken from an Italian tale "Apollonius and Silla". Sykes, for Rutland, says an Italian play "Gli Inganni" which was the inspiration for a play "Laelia" which was played at Cambridge University in 1592. Shakespeare must have seen this play because of the similar handling of character and situation in it and in "Twelfth Night". Allen, for Oxford, believes that the plays are taken from contemporary history, that Sir Andrew Aguecheek is Sir Philip Sidney, Viola is Queen Elizabeth, and Orsino is Alençon, to whom it was intended she should be married. The play was by way of being propaganda for this union.

The case for the Earl of Derby is one which has not captured the imagination to quite the same extent as the other theories. It is known that Derby wrote plays: and it is contended that "Love's Labour Lost" shows an accurate picture of the court of Navarre, which Derby had visited in the fifteen-eighties. This sort of parallel is common to all of the theories, and with it there is the invitation to accept all parallels as imitations. If Derby wrote the plays he stopped writing thirty years before his death and four years before Shakespeare's.

That fantasy which suggests that William Shakespeare was merely another name for Francis Bacon is possibly the widest known and the oldest of the authorship theories. It is perhaps significant that it has its most earnest and devoted disciples in the United States.

The Bacon theory depends partly on cryptograms, and does not

necessarily stop at the limited belief that Bacon wrote Shakespeare, but can on occasion be extended to include Marlowe, Lyly, Greene, Peele, Nash, Spenser and any other Elizabethan writer who catches the fancy or echoes even the most platitudinous idea of Bacon's.

This theory requires of its proselytes a certain idolatrous love of Francis Bacon and a complementary aversion to William Shakespeare. They seem to overlook the fact that the rustic usurer, the illiterate libertine of their imagination, had enough sense of his own pride and importance to want to possess a motto and a coat of arms. Why should the wretched nonentity of their hatred want that?

Examples of the Bacon theory are numerous. Alfred Dodd ("The Secret Shakespeare") suggests that Bacon revealed himself in this manner:

Captain: F irst let my words stab him, as he hath me"
Suffolk: BA se slave, thy words are blunt and so art thou"
Captain: CON vey him hence, and on our longboat's side . . .

(II Henry VI
Act iv Scene 1)

Several instances of this sort of thing allied to a quite arbitrary interpretation of other first word initials make up the bulk of this argument, which does scant justice to Bacon's master mind. Some of the other "clues" are a little more difficult. One example will suffice:

Guiderius: A nd at first meeting lov'd;
CON tinued so until we thought he died.
Cornelius: B y the queen's dram she swallowed."

(Cymbeline. Act v Scene 5)

By much the same reasoning Dodd also proves that Bacon was the head of the Freemasons, since when the letters W.F. appear as initial letters on consecutive lines they indicate "Worthy Freemason".

This revelation from hidden clues tends to become a sort of calculated gibberish. William Moore (in "Shakespeare") for instance, is so doughty in his belief in his cyphers that he scorns all other evidence and proves Bacon's authorship by a system of eclectic quotations so tortured that it seems nothing better than a painstaking and somewhat tedious hoax. It is all rather like a nightmare in a waking state.

To the devoted Baconions, however, the weightiest evidence in their creed is possibly Shakespeare's legal knowledge as evidenced in the plays. In effect they ask "How came the author to have such legal knowledge?" (Bacon was Attorney General.) Where in fact did the writer obtain all his undeniable attitude of the cultured and well-bred? Shakespeare was never educated. He was not known to have travelled, yet he knew details about Venice. He is not known to have been to war, but he wrote about it with what seems to be the insight of experience.

For the rest the argument seems to be that Shakespeare was a classical scholar (proved by the particular way in which he employs certain words

and phrases), and that there are so many coincidences of thought and phrase in Shakespeare and Bacon that one mind must have been responsible for the work of both. Against all this there is the marked dissimilarity in the prose styles of the two men, and their opposed intellectual interests: there is Bacon's low opinion of the theatre, and the simple fact that other Elizabethan writers use legal phrases and allusions to much the same extent as Shakespeare.

The Bacon theory is answered casually enough by Claud Sykes ("Alias William Shakespeare") who argues that the plays were written by Roger Manners, fifth Earl of Rutland. The point which seems to enrapture the Baconions (the outstanding legal knowledge of the writer of the plays) is blunted neatly, for Sykes says that Bacon was not likely to make mistakes in matters of law, but that Rutland, with less legal training, was likely to do so. And there are errors in the plays. It should be emphasized however that J. M. Robertson has shown conclusively that there is nothing in this theory of Shakespeare's unusually exact and extensive legal knowledge: and who can believe that a lawyer would think Shylock justly treated?

The Rutland theory of Sykes is quite ingenious, since it is based upon somewhat more ponderable and persuasive evidence than most of the theories provide: it never degenerates into the merely silly. Roughly, the argument can be summarized as follows—William Shakespeare the Stratford actor would have been too busy acting in the plays to write them: the author went to Cambridge since Cambridge slang is used in that particular way peculiar to the members of the University: he knew Venice by personal visit, since some of the Venetian touches in the plays are not of the sort commonly narrated by returning travellers; he had contact with an Italian play, "Il Cesare" published in Verona in 1594. It is alleged that this play was the play on which "Julius Caesar" was based, since there are striking parallel phrases and echoes in Shakespeare's play. It is probable that the author of Julius Caesar travelled to Verona or some other parts of Italy for the book of the Italian play was not likely to have reached England.

Sykes further contends that the author visited Denmark between the first and second publications of Hamlet, and revised the play accordingly, adding significant local detail: also that he was at Cambridge with the Earl of Southampton, to whom his "Venus and Adonis" and "Rape of Lucrece" were dedicated. Finally there is a little of the inevitable word play without which no authorship theory would be complete.

"My tongue-tied muse in *manners* holds her still" Sykes quotes: and there is another apposite quotation from Ben Jonson's poem to Shakespeare:

" . . . the race
of Shakespeare's mind and *manners* brightly shines

in his well-turned and true-filed lines,
in each of which he seems to shake a lance . . ."

In this theory it is held that some of the plays were written as propaganda for the Earl of Essex, and when the Essex rebellion failed and the conspirators were sentenced, Rutland was heavily fined, although his part in the rising was admittedly small. Of Rutland, the others in the plot said "they could not trust him with the matter above two hours before they attempted it". Why, then, the heavy fine? The argument runs that Elizabeth's anger was aroused against Rutland because he wrote the plays, one of which (Richard II) was performed just before the Essex rising, allegedly to excite the passions of the people. There is no record that anything happened to Shakespeare, the Stratford man. It is pointed out too that Shakespeare had no love for the queen and did not write even a token elegy for her, despite the public exhortations of other poets that he should do so: and there is of course the passage on virginity in "All's Well That Ends Well" which could not have pleased the queen.

Roger Manners would have had to commence his writing career early: but he did suffer a period of deep depression at the time that "King Lear" is supposed to have been written: and as far as we know no such circumstance occurred to the Stratford actor, nor for that matter to Francis Bacon.

(*To be concluded.*)

ENDURING SONG

GEORGE MOOR

Sweet fields of English poetry
The day has gone,
But from meadow, copse and hill,
Clear and quiet the birds sing still
In the sunken sun.

Sweet fields where the light is dying,
The bright day gone,
Evening, where cool winds are sighing,
Many twilight voices trying,
From their crying one;

Sweet fields, all night long will keep
Awake the moon-laced meadows pale.
Till the old think no more of sleep
And the listening lovers weep
With the woodland nightingale.
While noons burn clear, while shadows creep,
How can earth's singing fail?

American Poetry: II

DR. SITWELL AND THE AMERICAN GENIUS

(*The American Genius*, an anthology of Poetry with Some Prose, Selected with a Preface by Edith Sitwell, John Lehmann, London, 12s. 6d.)

By EVELYN SCOTT

There is great range and variety in this compilation; which begins familiarly in the tradition of Edward Taylor, Poe and Melville and concludes in "modern" vein with José Garcia Villa, Charles Henri Ford and Theodore Roethke. And while Melville—whose poetry is infrequently quoted—is a very bad poet, indeed, when judged by the verse herein, Dr. Sitwell has offset any misconception as to his genius which might otherwise arise from a necessity, apparently historical, to include him a typically enveloped in mediocrity by appending to her book an excerpt from his far more "poetic" prose which is, at moments, replete with romantic grandeur, and, at moments, grandiose.

Edith Sitwell has, in fact, inaugurated here a form of comparison which could be profitably extended in respect to every serious author of the United States and Britain who has resorted both to prose and to poetry. And though Marianne Moore, in her later generation, also, is represented by writings which introduced her to the public when her feet were still poised on the brink of science and there was much interrogation of the ascription to her of a poetic genre, the further inclusion here of certain pages from the "Travels" of William Bartram—who might have been the prose precursor of her early days!—enhances the pleasure of re-reading the first output of one whose almost primitive emotional simplicity, in combination with an eager intelligence and genuine culture, has been the precipitant of an art without counterpart, seldom lyrical but at once naïve and tellingly astute. And since the experiments of Gertrude Stein in that inconsequentialness of "dadaism" eschewed by this younger contemporary, were so deliberated and mentalized as to result in artifice rather than art, it would have been fairer to her, too, to have balanced verse in which she was outdone by Elsa von Freytag Loringhoven with a page or two of her lumberingly veracious prose; and yet more to the point to add, in emendation of Horace Gregory's poetic notation of history in his "Chorus for Survival", something of the nervous vigour of his prose praise of D. H. Lawrence; and to supplement the levity of William Carlos Williams' "The Sea Elephant" with a passage from his uncataloguable "In the American Grain", which blazes with the released passion antithetically constrained in his poems by the resistant tensions that integrate them.

Edith Sitwell has editorial as well as creative daring; and there is enough stimulus in the poetry comprised in her anthology to conduce to the reviewer's hope that the promise in her preface of anthologies in the same category to follow this one will be fulfilled, and will perhaps enable her to rescue from recent increased neglect the writings of the American whose poetry and character alike were, far more than Whitman's, those of Blake, the late Lola Ridge; and—in resurrecting her "The Ghetto" of New York, her Australian "Sun-up" and her "Dance of Fire" and "Firehead" with its unorthodox portrayal of Christ—to restore, also, to the public the late Theodore Spencer, who—like her and like Hart Crane—was prematurely defeated by mortality.

The uniformity of a commercial age has nearly buried as many of the living; and the reviewer longs as much for the exhumation, from encroaching machine oblivion, of such fine and highly individualized, still-quick talents as distinguish Charlotte Wilder, Kay Boyle, Lenore Marshall, Louise Saunders, Louise Bogan, Eileen Lake, the William Faulkner of poetry, Marya Zaturenska, Djuna Barnes, John Peale Bishop, John Hall Wheelock, and that gentle worldling of ripened wisdom, Witter Bynner. And because this appeal is prompted by the evidence of aesthetic acumen on Dr. Sitwell's part, it seems doubly regrettable that she has unnecessarily handicapped her critical powers by genuflecting to a new demand of American academicism and interlarding her really significant comment on the material she has assembled with an analysis of poetic "techniques" doubtless proposed to her as an incitement to "reader appreciation", but actually a dissuasion to ready response to beauty so thoroughly exasperating it might have been devised by some pedant of the Germany of Goethe.

It is relieving to turn from such interpolations to Dr. Sitwell's perceptive general views on that lyric rock of aesthetic chastity, Emily Dickinson; and on Whitman whom Dr. Sitwell loosely links with Blake by designating both "men of God", Christlike in their magnanimities and compassions. However, though excerpts from their writings substantiate her statements, one cannot but feel she errs in accrediting Whitman with having led poetry "away from misty abstraction" and "back to the divine, original concrete", since, despite his vaunted "earthiness", realism in regard to nature was so conspicuously absent from his outlook that the genesis of many of his raptures is as non-specific as the ecstasy of any spokesmen of vast-scale "enterprise", and only his deep and passionate sincerity elevates him above an embracing of "humanity" that is sheer dimension.

The ungrudgingness of Whitman's emotive language is contagious, and it is difficult to appraise him with detachment; but it seems to the reviewer that Dr. Sitwell shares a fallacy implicit in his over-generosity

of temperament when she fails to emphasize his identity with nature as too complete and unconscious to admit of his becoming the mature interpreter of the natural scheme to man; for Tennyson—while inferior to him in emotional stature—was his intellectual superior in a human awareness of nature "red in tooth and claw"; and Blake, before either, had plumbed "earth" in terms so preclusive of evasion that he exceeds both in correctives for "misty abstraction" in a single often-quoted poem: that beginning, "Tiger, tiger, etc."

Blake's knowledge of "earth" was not to be improved upon by the "progress" of "science"; and Dr. Sitwell, in the reviewer's opinion, should have carried further her comparison of the two men, and should have been somewhat more examining of Sydney Lanier; whose philosophic innocence was the equivalent of Whitman's, and who, though debarred by his Victorian's moral premise from access to Whitman's catholicities, was as imbued as he with Christian tenderness, and sought refuge from man-made evils in that sense of timeless spaciousness which nature, to the Victorian, chiefly conveyed. And while Lanier, in his woodland fastness, was unrealizing of the predatory ruthlessness concealed in the impressive solitudes of the Carolinas and did not pursue the Christian's path beyond the "Mount of Olives", it is well not to forget that Whitman, too, recoiled from the "Gethsemane" which inevitably concludes Christian logic with a realistic foundation, and which was endured by Blake to the last hell-pang.

Whitman's sumptuous emotional expansiveness tends to overwhelm criticism! And since war's myopias have shockingly exaggerated those brutal prejudices of peace which—as Dr. Sitwell recalls to us—reckoned him "profligate" and Blake "mad"—even as the painters, Goya and Turner were similarly damned, and as would be, after them, the painter, Van Gogh and his literary contemporary, de Maupassant—it has grown almost as difficult to appraise with cool judgment the poetry of so exceptional a creative victim of war as Ezra Pound.

Edith Sitwell has a transparent aversion to caddishness which the reviewer fervently wishes were to be more frequently encountered; and her refusal to find fault with Pound's work may awaken scepticism in some quarters. Nonetheless, it should be granted that he has made himself an inexpugnable figure in art; and that forever recorded in art's annals is the nostalgia for fabled antiquity which sent this native of the middle-West forth into Europe to become a poet in his own right and of a magnitude to be honoured, though he was never that "influence" on other poets he initially aspired to be.

Pound's flight from Western crudities and from the machine-age coincided with T. S. Eliot's, and with that of the Hilda Doolittle who, with the same native trustfulness toward "old world" cultures, fled

academic Pennsylvania, and was converted in London into that unmelting snowflake of poetry, H.D.

In the aloofness with which she opposed crass circumstance, she most resembles Charlotte Wilder, whose scope is greater, but who is like her in a crystalline aesthetic purity such as is exampled, despite other dissimilarities, in Emily Dickinson. However, Pound and H.D. have it in common that they early addressed ancient Greece in the spirit of Poe when inditing, from the midst of the slovenly provincialism of the antebellum South, the lines "To Helen" Dr. Sitwell has not omitted. And though nothing of H.D.'s origin is perceptible in her zephyr-breathing of aesthetic integrity, Pound's innate American naïveté has continued to be manifested in that blended smattering of the lores of many lands with which he compounds an Attic scene of his fancy comparable, in its merging of moving myth and homelier contemporaneity, to a thirteenth-century painting of an "Adoration" commanded of an "immortal" by a Burgher fortunately as unconcerned with historical accuracies as the readers who feel, with Dr. Sitwell, the musical sweep of Pound's *Cantos* and the real strength of his sensuously re-inforced imagination.

Dr. Sitwell, the reviewer thinks, is, to the utmost, dependable as to taste; but, having critically misapplied *noblesse oblige* to Pound, she does so again in denominating it an "impertinence" to discuss in its entirety, in limited confines, T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land", because the whole of it is not included in her anthology!

To grasp the whole intention of the poem, seems to the reviewer, essential to a full sense of the import of its ominous beauties! And when she declares Eliot's poetry the "root" from which sprang the "main" poetic trends of our era, she parallels in reverent inexactitude an American reviewer of prose who once attributed to John Dos Passos the inception of that fictional form unifying an aggregate of lives which too often is ascribed to Virginia Woolf, and which actually was first used by Jules Romains, when of the *Unanimistes* of Paris, in his almost perfect little novel, *Mort de Quelqu'un.*

A marked aspect of Eliot's subtle, sometimes profound feeling is his mastery of portent; and no doubt there have been imitators of the dark, indefinable presage which pervades the disillusionment of his early work. But there is nothing to indicate that he was ever guilty of the weakness of inviting discipleship, and of the genuine talents known to the reviewer none save that of W. H. Auden can be plausibly traced to poetic descent from him. And it is, therefore, somewhat amazing that Edith Sitwell, by her contrary assertion, should have contradicted her own valued words on such younger men as Villa, Patchen, Robert Lowell, Charles Ford, and Roethke, who are as dissimilar from Eliot as from one another.

To attribute to Eliot all the generation of these poets is a fallacy which has been current in America for the last fifteen years; and apparently,

Dr. Sitwell, as a visitor to our shores, has been over-hasty in her acceptance of a stereotype of American criticism. But there are compensations, for the reviewer, to whom she has "discovered" José Garcia Villa: whose poems of amorous ravagement, of self-accusation, and of fury against the betraying lie to which mankind is perpetually prone, are enriched by his absorption of the ancient Spanish drama of religious passion.

Villa is unique, and writes as might have Coleridge had he been Latin and a religious man! And Dr. Sitwell's aesthetic fastidiousness has further verification in her inclusion here of Robert Lowell's "The Ghost"; a bit of Browningesque, psychological realism neo-classic in dress and like a delightfully-horribly prolonged epigram, which is not altogether happily described by her as "naked" in its "majesty".

These are not poetic emanations from the Eliot tradition! Nor is the included poetry by Kenneth Patchen; who is one of those who have walked furthest in that most deathly shadow of small-town fraternity houses, poolrooms and corner bars trodden in prose by William Faulkner, and, in proximity to these Nirvanas for impoverished spirits, is developing an unebullient philosophy that is a poignant challenge to national vacuities which cover artless lacks with noise and slang.

Four years of the reviewer's childhood were spent near Owensboro, and were overcast for her by the spell of three cedars rendered as gruesome to her as a Grunewald "Crucifixion" by the knowledge that they were once the site of a lynching, so that she cannot read Charles Henri Ford's Owensboro poem without calling to mind both her own early poem on the same subject, and that of Lola Ridge, in her volume, "Red Flag". And as Miss Ridge's poem, on its publication, was censured as "propaganda", it seems pertinent to stress here a division of the pure from the "purists"; since to wax lyrically indignant in the face of tragedies with "social implications" that are of to-day is not synonymous with the writing of a thesis; and though Charles Ford's is a more cerebrated revulsion against outrage than that of the deeply wrought-upon Miss Ridge, the bizarre "rightness" of certain of his lines that have been denominated "forced" are an index of vision that clings in one's thoughts. He is often accused of "straining for effects", but in "The Living Corpse" and "The Overturned Lake"—if not always in the lynching "Plaint"—thought and feeling fuse.

Dr. Sitwell's second "discovery" is Theodore Roethke. However, of the four poems given, only that numbered "5" has the content and finish of fine poetry; the other three—fragmentary and conveying with pristine vividness impressions of concretes—suggesting rather the future author of poetic prose. And as Richard Eberhart, also, is here met with by the reviewer for the first time and it is critically dangerous to attempt to summarize talent on the basis of a single poem—even when, like his

"The Groundhog", it has reflective substance in the humbling of the poet's mind by a contemplation of death and decay—it is with a lightening of the burden of critical scruple that she returns again to poets chronologically exempted from charges that impugn their originality as of contemporary derivation.

In the articulation of the half-tones, the demi-tones, the chromatic nuances and—in the painter's meaning—the anguished "neutrals" of emotion's minor moods, E.E. Cummings has no prototype and no equal. And there is aesthetic excitement in the near-juxtaposition of his bitter-wistful, occasionally-irrepressibly-satiric heartbreaks to the tenuous emotion but intellectually incisive metaphysique of Wallace Stevens; who is the most natural present heir of "Transcendentalism", which, in him is metamorphosed in an expression parsimoniously austere.

The refreshments of contrast available in Dr. Sitwell's book are continued in Robert Frost's fidelity to that bleak New England "home-spun" it is not within the province of poets of more universal bent to evoke. And though he is not at his best in his competent, too-obvious tale of "The Witch of Coos", there is a fillip for readers in measuring his treatment of legend with that of John Crowe Ransom; who, some years past, retreated from our hideous era by disavowing the realism which, despite theory, has crept enliveningly and with macabre detail into the musty theme of his "Captain Carpenter." And so genuinely do the arts approximate the "democracy of spirit" of which politicians prate in spurious version, that it is possible to make without a jarring note the transition from this poet of the library to Hart Crane; whose mantle of the romantic great, young though he died, still fits him well, and is no mere hand-me-down from Melville or Conrad; though, like them, he expanded to an imagined geography of distance between men, to which he gave the refinements of a mind unencumbered by those obsolescing theologies that were Melville's affliction and Conrad's bane.

Hart Crane was closer to the primeval soil than Longfellow. And America is as indebted to Carl Sandburg, who first brought the recognition of death to the sleasy slipshod of our urban commerce and journalism; and in his "Cool Tombs", the flavour of Shakespearian tragedy rests on the lips of banality with as loving an appositeness as of old. And if the reviewer is not impelled to dissent from Dr. Sitwell's reserved estimate of Vachel Lindsay, she is right in not having dismissed him, since the few enduring poems which were his bestowal—on the "Salvationist" and negro revivalist—of a dignity latent in "jazz" only for him, are already as integral with American literature as "Ode on a Grecian Urn" and "Hymn to a Skylark" with the literature of the British Isles, and not even Keats and Shelley are to be judged on a quantitative basis.

Edith Sitwell's anthology is an antidote for "insularities", both British

and indigenous to America; and as corroboration of the value of defending and treasuring strong personalities, it should be widely recommended. However, precisely because she seems in the process of constructing a cultural "ark", it is irresistible to recommend to *her*, reversely, that self-effacing little satire by Laura Benét, "Noah's Dove"! Art—Dr. Sitwell would agree—though seldom sexless, must be above sex; and as contemporary talent, in the States, is as frequent among women as among men, and there are, in this collection, twenty-four masculine "names" to four feminine, the reviewer asks this most exceptional editor to believe it is not, truly, as one who protests a "shopper's" "charm" in Fifth Avenue surpassing any in Oxford Street and the Haymarket, that she importunes her to include a larger number of women in the anthologies which are to materialize.

DEEP AND CLEAR : P. D. CUMMINS

(*One is One.* By P. D. Cummins, Macmillan 7s. 6d.)

By ROY CAMPBELL

On the appearance of her last book of verse, *The Defeated*, Mrs. P. D. Cummins earned recognition immediately for qualities which are almost non-existent in most modern lyrical verse: qualities whose lack accounts for the alienation of human interest from modern verse, and its relegation by the public to the province of "acrostic-land", crosswords, and jig-saw puzzles. The salient virtue in Mrs. Cummins' work is that she is able to think deeply, yet clearly, and, at the same time, to feel deeply. This sins against the rationing-laws of modern criticism, which will not allow brawn and brain to go together, and hate to see thought and strong emotion operating to mutual advantage instead of mutual detriment as they generally do on the few occasions when they can be found to exist together in the same poet. To balance them consistently, as Mrs. Cummins has succeeded in doing, is a triumph, especially as the act of balancing in no way counteracts the verve and power of her lines whether in free verse or rhyme. One agrees with what Mr. Walter de la Mare said about her work as being "astonishingly beautiful and superbly recorded".

The title poem of this new collection is the most important work Mrs. Cummins has yet written. It occupies half the length of the book. Its title comes from the refrain of the familiar old song, "Green Grow the Rushes"; and this refrain forms a framework for the poem itself, every section of which terminates in the ending of the chorus from the song:

"One is one and all alone
And evermore shall be so."

This repetition acquires the sort of poignant intensity that similar

repetitions acquire in Villon and Dunbar, not so much because there is any real meaning or magic in the lines repeated, but because of the meaning with which they become charged by the lines that lead up to them, so that they acquire the force of a climax, though in the hands of anyone but a skilful artist they would tend first of all to ambiguity, then to monotony, and then to bathos.

The numbers, up to twelve, unmeaning enough in the old song, are given a profound significance in this poem on the innate loneliness of man in this world. They become living symbols and they are dealt with in the modern vernacular which so strikingly and ironically contrasts with the Toby-jug heartiness of the old song. The twelve sections into which the poem is divided represent the twelve numbers in the song: they are streamlined into one another without monotony until they terminate in this fine passage:

> "Twelve are the twelve spokes in the wheel
> Through which the hieroglyphs are shown,
> But one is one and all alone
> Who peers through the interstices
> Straining for other signs than these,
> And in his anguish only sees
> His angel chiselled out of stone
> Whose eyes devoid of sense and sight
> Must drain away the little light,
> The last faint glimmer from his own.
> One is one and all alone
> Who, blinded, cannot yet forego
> The endless groping to and fro
> The exploration of the night—
> One is one and all alone
> And evermore shall be so.
>
> And ever more shall be so."

The other poems in this book are all full of the same vital sincerity. The use of the refrain from the nursery-rhyme has been triumphantly exploited in our time both by Dr. Edith Sitwell and Federico Garcia Lorca—in very different ways. There is an interesting and successful manipulation of the theme "Your house is on fire and your children are gone", reprinted from the February-March, 1949, issue of *The Poetry Review*, in this same book, which suggests that the parodying of old refrains and rhymes for tragic effect can yet be explored in other directions too. Shakespeare was the first to get a grue out of the line of one of them: "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came."

There are also in this collection some excellent sonnets and lyrics of an almost epigrammatic clarity and concision.

TWELVE ON THE TABLE

Reviewed by
WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR

In the Days of His Youth, by Lord Gorell (John Murray, 7s. 6d.)
To the Dyfrdwy: The River I Love, by J. Redwood Anderson (Grasshopper Press, 2s.).
Collected Poems, by Ada Elizabeth Smith (Mitre Press, 6s.).
Lazarus and Other Poems, by Ruth Gilbert (A. H. & A. W. Read, Wellington, N.Z., 6s.).
I the I, by Patricia Villiers-Stuart (Fortune Press, 6s.).
Translations from Greek Poetry, by R. C. Trevelyan (Allen & Unwin, 5s.).
Brown Phoenix, by Cedric Dover (College Press, Dulwich, 2s. 6d.).
The House of Wine (*Madhushala*), by Bachchan, translated by Marjorie Boulton and Ram Swaroop Vyas. Foreword by Jawaharlal Nehru (Fortune Press, 7s. 6d.).
Almond in Peterhouse, by Franklin Kidd (Cambridge University Press, 6s.).
Vision, by B. R. Gibbs (Oxford University Press, 10s.).
My Tongue Is My Own, by Thomas Fassam (Hand & Flower Press, Aldington, Kent, 10s.).
Bibliography of Richard Aldington, by Alister Kershaw (Quadrant Press, n.p.).

Lord Gorell's poetry is so well known that, by a paradox, it tends to pass unnoticed. That is only to say that the tides of poetic taste, invention and criticism have swept by and around him without deflecting his inspiration and expression in the slightest degree. That inspiration has three main sources, often welling and mingling into one stream: a controlled but sensuous awareness of the visible world of appearances—primarily of English scenes; then, an exaltation of man's spirit under the Christian conception of God and the universe; and, finally and all-embracingly, a reverent sense of the dignity and responsibility of a poet's calling within the framework of the English poetic tradition.

The title poem of Lord Gorell's new volume, *In the Days of His Youth*, although written last, is the first piece of a trilogy of commentaries on the life of Christ, the other two parts of which have already appeared. Put in the mouth of Joseph the Carpenter it depicts Jesus in the formative years, before His earthly destiny was declared in deeds. The verse in this piece is of a smooth, minor-Wordsworthian order of decasyllabic blank verse and cannot be said to be notable. And yet, just as smooth and unexceptional prose with a purpose gathers its due meed of acceptance, so this well-wrought but unexceptional verse will probably please many readers on account of its subject; and indeed, in this as in his other

collections, Lord Gorell draws copiously upon the Bible for his themes. The poems that show him at his best are the three ambitious odes to the Sun, the Moon and the Stars, from the first of which I quote:

"Smile, smile on mortals, ministrant supreme:
We need the gift of laughter in our lives:
The troubled world engulfs us; times of dream
Are weighed with presages, and your bright beam
Is needed now as never . . . "

Another senior poet more varied in theme and craftsmanship, is Mr. J. Redwood Anderson whose *To the Dyfrdwy: the River I Love* comes from Mr. Kenneth Hopkins' Grasshopper Press and—like that emblematical insect—has a leaping quality all its own. The poem is both a celebration and an elegy, the latter occasioned by the drowning of two little children:

"Therefore, O Dyfrdwy, O river I love, therefore I love you still,
although you have wantonly taken—and yet, not wantonly:
for what knows fate of wantonness?—the lives of two innocent children;
still I can see in you the moving mirror of heaven,
the flowing silver signature of divine necessity,
the assurance that never the nature of things shall turn aside for my prayer . . ."

It was that same divine necessity that removed a most promising young poet from the late Victorian scene. Ada Elizabeth Smith (1875-1898), whose *Collected Poems* now appear, was born with an acute sense of beauty in the harsh Northumberland town of Haltwhistle. She published verse at thirteen and spent several youthful years in Germany, Austria and France, returning at twenty-two to take up a typewriting job in the City while preparing to storm the forts of fame. But soon a malady seized her with dreadful strength and she returned to Northumberland to die at the age of twenty-three. Ada Elizabeth Smith was essentially a lyrist, one who—if she had recognised in time the dangers of too great facility—might have become a considerable poet. Her spirit was most at home on those vast moorlands above Hexham; and having once myself spent a day on Blanchland Common—that high mysterious plateau which awaits its Thomas Hardy—I like to think she had Blanchland in mind when she wrote "Twilight":

"If I could but understand
What the tremulous twilight means,
And why, where the low sky leans
To the lonely-lying land,

Flicker no comforting gleams,
But only the ancient woe

Of the strange wild thing that screams
Where the sere-leaved sedges grow.

Faint to the faint sky's rim,
The empty road and the heath
Lie eloquent, hushed and dim
With a secret of life or death.

And I, where the low sky leans
To the lonely-lying land—
If I could but understand
What the tremulous twilight means!"

Another woman writer is Miss Ruth Gilbert, whose book, *Lazarus and Other Poems*, was fortunately subsidised by the New Zealand State Literary Fund in addition to being embellished by several excellent wood engravings by Mr. E. Mervyn Taylor. Miss Gilbert has won the Jessie Mackay award for two years in succession, so, all in all, her book has had a good send-off! The title poem is in three brief parts in varied quatrain metres; the first giving the disappointed reaction of the betrothed of the risen Lazarus, the second the loyal acceptance of the miracle by his sisters, and the third Lazarus's own mingled sense of exaltation and disillusion. Mocked by friends and feared by his betrothed, the glory of his experience fades:

"They will not heed the wisdom I would teach,
Their laughter mocks the truest words I say,
The star of knowledge gleams beyond their reach,
And from its shining they have turned away.

Yet these were naught; but when each day I see
My love's dark eyes estranged and bright with pain
I cry to Him whose mercy wakened me
To speak once more, and bid me sleep again."

Miss Gilbert successfully repeats the formula in the three-part poem "Leah," spoken respectively by Leah, Jacob and Rachel. One of the most dramatic "triangles" of literature ancient or modern concludes with Rachel's forthright comment:

"I can forgive you everything but this—
Laban and Leah struck no keener blow—
One stole my bridal, one my marriage kiss,
But you were blind, and slept, and did not know."

I foresee an increased emigration of poets to New Zealand—and to the State Literary Fund.

Mrs. Patricia Villiers-Stuart's poetic intensity is less formal and line-built than Miss Gilbert's. I suspect that, apart from reading William Blake's songs, she has not studied verse-technique extensively but relies

on her "voices," like Saint Joan. And the result, in *I the I,* is somewhat bewilderingly and confusedly self-assertive, although frequent passages satisfy me that the author's thoughts are often both vital and interesting, as in the poem of protest against war, with its dire conclusion:

"I am the Man you must not kill
For I am You."

The late R. C. Trevelyan's *Translations from Greek Poetry* is a mine of delights for those who have little or no Greek, as well as for the few who like to check their own understanding of the originals. This volume contains four Homeric Hymns, Fragments from Lost Tragedies and Lost Comedies, Choruses from Aeschylus and Sophocles, Lyrics, and Epigrams from the Anthology. R. C. Trevelyan had a scholarship that was never dryasdust, and to the task of translation he brought genuine poetic sensibility and a subtle perception of wit. Here is a sample from a lost comedy by Alexis:

"We can discover everything we seek,
Unless we abjure the quest and shirk the toil.
For since some men have made discoveries
About celestial motions far remote—
How the stars rise and set—what are their courses—
The sun's eclipses—why should they avoid
Man's common human problems here on Earth?"

One of those common human problems is that of race and colour, and Mr. Cedric Dover, the Eurasian author of *Brown Phoenix*, shakes and worries it with a tenacity and vigour calculated to make a pure white, who prides himself on his progressive humanity, shrink back bewildered. In the title poem the colour-consciousness surges beyond the plea for wider human understanding into the bitter taunt launched at the Western man:

"For we are tomorrow's men,
But not you,
Little pink white man,
Not you!"

Which gets us no forrader! I prefer Mr. Dover when he is writing not as a Brown Phoenix but as an unlabelled satirist in verses of considerable punch and penetration.

Some of us are familiar with embarrassing collections of verse written by Hindus and Moslems *in English*, in which the product is usually neither one thing nor the other; but in *The House of Wine* we have the chief work of the modern poet Bachchan translated from the Hindi into English by Miss Marjorie Boulton and Ram Swaroop Vyas and introduced by Pandit Nehru who avers that it "does somewhat convey the essence of the original." Reading the poem an immediate comparison with Omar Khayyam springs to mind, and it appears that Bachchan

first rendered Omar into Hindi and then distilled his own philosophy and poetry from that close study. That philosophy embodies the conception of the transience of beauty under the constant shadow of Death, and all the familiar Persian symbolism only tricks out and beautifies an Eastern concept of Fatalism:

"The House of Wine is like a bride
Whose lover never can return."

For those anxious to acquaint themselves with a tendency in contemporary Indian poetry this sincere but pedestrian rendering of the Madhushala is recommended.

A book of poems by a scientist Fellow of the Royal Society is a cheering sight on any reviewer's desk and Mr. Franklin Kidd's *Almond in Peterhouse* rather curiously combines the exactitude of the scientific approach with a brief instinctive lyricism. The almond poem is apt as an example:

"The naked knife of Beauty
Biteth deep.
Beauty of Earth—Beauty of Earth!
Beyond tears,
Beyond heartache!
Intake of breath
Shatters the self's full ease
To pertinent nullity:
Oh, lovely One,
In your absolute Otherness!"

Mrs. B. R. Gibbs has not been overmuch publicized in this country as the winner of the 1950 Annual Prize of $1000 for a poem on Individual and International Morality. Now we can estimate the quality of her work in *Vision*, a poem in mainly unrhymed verse in the first person singular; a preaching poem on the theme of war and the sufferings and misery war exacts. Shifting from hobbledehoy youth to battlefield manhood and the visitation of blindness the poem often poignantly expresses the lesson it would convey—at times with the coarse abandon of the early Masefield, but then with the clean bitter statement of a later generation:

"And now, for my denial
of mercy, what is the mercy I have obtained?
Darkness, this dry black cottonwool
pressed evermore and evermore
against the rainbow marbles of my eyes
that they may see no rainbow in the skies."

Where this poem has particular force is in the tracing of the individual's and the community's psychological approach to organized warfare. But if it were only as simple as that . . . !

Of all these books the one that appeals to me most is Mr. Thomas Fassam's *My Tongue Is My Own*, a volume covering, we are told, twenty years of his life. His style combines great simplicity with extreme subtlety and accomplishment. He is not of those who attempt the impossible and reject the "tradition", but one rather who accepts the Past with the Present, both in form and content, and uses them for the full expression of his very alert ego. How often for instance poems have been written on the theme of "that not impossible She," and here is a modern poet returning to it in the poem "As a Criminal," from which I have space to quote only the last stanza:

"She will not come now. Or if, at the end,
She come in godly guise for my release
Will I forsake myself, my shackled friend,
And rest not till I rest in her at peace?
Why do you, gaoler, laugh at me and say:
'She passed you by. This is another day'?"

The note struck in that poem is the prevailing one in Mr. Fassam's book: deeply quiet and reflective and infinitely personal. As such it should appeal to artists both of emotion and expression.

As a pendant I record the publication of a *Bibliography of the Works of Richard Aldington from* 1915 *to* 1948. Mr. Alister Kershaw has done a good job exhaustively well. It is an inspiring if frightening thought that one of our contemporaries should have played so many parts, from Imagism with Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot to the production of some of the most vital novels and biographies of the century.

SHORT REVIEWS

A B C of Reading, by Ezra Pound (Faber, 8s. 6d.).

The Letters of Ezra Pound, edited by D. D. Paige (Faber, 25s.).

W. B. Yeats: The Tragic Phase. A study of the Last Poems, by Vivienne Koch (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 10s. 6d.).

It was a happy idea to reprint the *A B C of Reading* at the same time as the *Letters*. The *A B C* contains, with an anthology of extracts, Pound's desiderated minimum of world poetry (and some prose) that any *writer* with a claim to culture must master; that if he does not he just cannot hope to know *what* has been done once for all, and *how* it has been done. He is dogmatic, provocative and, some will think, myopic. But he persistently challenges the reader to produce an equally valid and substantiated alternative list; he continually throws him back from the

"Histories of Literature" to a close scrutiny of actual texts—among the highest functions any critic can perform. The germ of this *A B C* and of the pamphlet *How to Read* is to be found in his correspondence with Iris Barry.

The publication of the *Letters* is an event of the highest literary importance. They go far to explain the enigma of Ezra Pound and to reveal his outstanding characteristics: his originality; his fearlessness; his critical tenacity (*vide*, e.g., the letters to W. H. D. Rouse); his extraordinary generosity, both in time and money, to young and struggling writers, and his efforts, often at great cost to himself, to secure for them some recompense for their labours and an intelligent platform for their views. He reveals a remarkably detached championship of the qualities of good writing even in those who attack him (see his admirable letter to William Carlos Williams, pp. 220-4, where he concludes, after answering Williams's public attack, "Have written to *Dial* you are the best thing in the country."); or those from whose later work, e.g., Eliot, he feels obliged radically to dissociate himself. And next to his virtues of quixotic generosity and critical acumen—he recognised the worth of the first Eliot poems (*Portrait of a Lady; Prufrock*) he saw, forced through their publication, and never went back on his opinion of their author's authentic genius—next to these, and explaining so much, is his essential consistency and integrity.

The implications of the *A B C of Reading* run through his criticism and mould his own practice; those of the *A B C of Economics* inform his Monetary Reform pamphlets, permeate the *Cantos*, and were the basis for his political broadcasts. But it was the creative writer unable to get a hearing or make a living in America or, later, in London, whose attention was forced on to an examination of the whole artificial structure of modern finance and economics and an exposure of its venalities. That Pound was a "Fascist traitor" in the ordinary sense is manifestly absurd; he merely continued to proclaim with consistency those doctrines he had fought so hard to publicise from that same Italian soil over the previous ten years. Surely it should be possible to bring this point home to the American authorities after this lapse of time and obtain now his honourable release?

Even to those, however, who are not specifically interested in Pound's theories, literary or economic, these *Letters* reveal a man thwarted, rebuffed, but never embittered; endowed with a rich sense of humour, immense vitality and courage, and a perfervid persistency dedicated, and dedicated absolutely without self-interest and with fanatical zeal, to the cause of art and letters. Moreover, the book will be valuable as a vivid "scrap-album" of the personalities of the literary and artistic worlds from 1910 to 1940—for Pound rightly claims to have known everyone who mattered. His immense influence on the *avant garde*

literature—and art—of the period, not so much by example as by precept, by forcing upon editors and publishers, or himself publishing in various magazines, such work as Joyce's *Portrait* and *Ulysses*, Eliot's *Prufrock* and *Waste Land*, Wyndham Lewis's *Tarr*, has never been widely realised before. His dogmatism, too, has become more explicable. He only dogmatises over things that he really knows—original literary and musical forms, for example; when he doesn't know, he says so, frankly and with disarming modesty. And on the personal side here is a man with a genius for disinterested friendship, and an incorruptible passion for what he believes to be the truth. When all the Russelling of the leaves of his more ephemeral writing dies away this is the pattern that will remain.

"Out they came tumbling in twos and in dozens." Of the making of books on Yeats there is, apparently, no end; but Miss Vivienne Koch's is a particularly happy example. She takes a selection of thirteen of the *Last Poems* and reprints them (admirable woman!) following each with a detailed analysis of meaning, technique, and significance in the development of Yeats's thought and "philosophy".

Perhaps the tragic aspect and the unreconciled dichotomy of sexual desire and spiritual aspiration are a little over-emphasised. There was a deep element of joy within the tragedy, even of that gaiety explicitly exalted in *Lapis Lazuli*—a poem she unaccountably omits to examine. But it would be ungenerous to be as carping of Miss Koch as she is of some of her fellow critics. She has done a difficult job well; she has explored with frankness, sensitivity, and critical insight a group of poems, especially the *Three Bushes* sequence, surprisingly little investigated hitherto.

HERMANN PESCHMANN.

Farewell, Aggie Weston, by Charles Causley (The Hand and Flower Press, 1s.).

The Hand and Flower Press, of Aldington in Kent, has started a new Shilling series called Poems in Pamphlet, each devoted to the work of one poet who has not previously been published in book form. Number 1 collects together for the first time the work of a young Cornish poet, Charles Causley, hitherto known chiefly for his contributions to *The West Country Magazine, The Adelphi, Tribune,* and other periodicals.

Farewell, Aggie Weston, is a remarkable work, of great sensitiveness and yet of prodigious vitality. "As I walked down by the river"—so the first poem in this volume begins—

> As I walked down by the river
> Down by the frozen fen
> I saw the grey cathedral
> With the eyes of a child of ten.
> O the railway arch is smoky

As the Flying Scot goes by
And but for the Education Act
Go Jumper Cross and I.

And so we race along, through moods and moments, rhyme and no rhyme, metre or none, until, panting and blowing off steam, we creep warily into the terminus with:

No: they will not return to the post-war British Legion,
To the N.U.R. and the lodge nights of beer and whisky.
They are seduced by the guitars and *flamenco* of Andalusia
And St. Nicholas', Ombersley Road, has no wine or banners at Corpus Christi.

But who, you may ask, are "they"? And who was Jumper Cross? And why the Education Act? Well, "they" are the sons of Droitwich who went abroad to the wars; and Jumper was killed in Italy—"His funeral knell was a six-inch shell Singing across the sky". But as for the Education Act, one wouldn't know about that.

"Singing" across the sky! Causley is one of a number of war-time and post-war poets in respect of whose work it can be said that English poetry, having spent an unconscionably long time in looking round, is at last beginning to look up. You can think of poetry this last 50 years as groping towards a new form of expression. Humanity is not a static state, and new forms of art are necessary to preserve vitality. But it has not been an easy task. The poet, particularly, is handicapped, because he has no new material at his disposal. He must use words which are inherited, like blue eyes and roman noses, from some distant past, words which already have accepted rhythmic patterns. The most he can hope to do is to arrange the words a little differently, to provide new associations or slightly varied sounds, to look at the world around him from some altered point of view. So Causley writes thus:

Now he is fumbled by ancient tides
Among decks flagged with seaweed
But no flags sees he there.
His fingers are washed to stone
And to phosphor
And there are starfish in his hair.

It is for *that* sort of poetry, its lyric poetry, that the English tongue is most, and most justly famous. Causley manages to infuse with this lyric quality what seem at first sight to be the most ordinary combinations of words.

Your face is India;
And when they said your blood is touched with tar
I knew I had seen you in the gardens at Malabar
Where the hedges are cut into warriors and peacocks
And the shouting and swearing comes up from the silk-bazaar.

And then he will rise right out of that and produce something so superb as this:

> And Richard of England comes limping into the thick air
> Of velvet and drums, crown and ermine and scarlet,
> And the wanton flags licking like tongues the brilliant blue
> bowl of the morning.

It would seem that with poets like Causley the English lyric is beginning to live again. By that I really do mean that it seems to be being re-born. All through the 18th and 19th centuries poetry was growing up until around the turn of this century it had become almost unbearably sophisticated and mature. Then, just when one was beginning to despair of it altogether, the spring slipped, and it whizzed back through the chaos of the 'teens and the 'twenties to its beginnings: to Shakespeare, and Suckling, and Marvell, and Herrick, to the vitality, the cadence, and the common idiom of ordinary speech.

But speech which shines. Causley, who wrote of a mouth full of stars has himself a mouth full of music. He has an astonishing felicity of simile—of the sea "pulling over the pebbles with long salt fingers below me"; of a sailor in an Arctic convoy that "He is now a child in the land of Christmas"; of "the white ships of winter in the sea-roads of the moor"; or a mountain "wearing decently her conventional mists."

During the War Causley sailed seas, saw death and new lands, and heard new sounds. Now he is back in Cornwall.

> Here, by the Inney, nature has her city:
> (O the cypress trees of Mahomed Ali square!)
> The children build their harbour in the meadow
> And the crystal lark floats on the Cornish air.

There may be a critic or two who will suggest that now Causley should turn his mind to more serious material. But one would suggest that the proper function of a lyric poet is not so much to depict the rain as to drag the clouds asunder and let the sunshine through. Let no man who could write:

> O shall I leap in the river
> And knock upon paradise door

be ever asked to descend to hell's gate!

JOHN NANCE.

Guitar, by Rob Lyle (The Hand and Flower Press, 1s.).

Every now and again, because of a curious quirk in the mind of man, a particular disease becomes the fashion; at one time, it was appendicitis, at another, colitis, and so on. During the last few years, the modish complaint amongst a large number of poets has been pernicious anaemia, the chief symptoms of which are a vast amount of sterile cerebration and an alarming absence of red corpuscles. Indeed, if these poets were, like

Catullus, to sever an artery in the bath, it is doubtful whether the water would be even faintly tinged with pink.

In the prevailing greyness, the full-blooded and vital verse of Rob Lyle has an immediate and tonic effect: it drives home the conviction that, no matter what happens, it is good to be alive. Here is one more instance of a poet who, because he possesses a concrete faith in another world, is able to show us the world of actuality as both lovely and desirable.

"In Memoriam Manolete" with which this collection, "Guitar" opens, and notably those with a Spanish theme, are eloquent of Rob Lyle's profound admiration for Roy Campbell. Admiration is one thing, however, slavish imitation another, and this book affords abundant proof of Mr. Lyle's individualism. Outstanding are "Athletae Dei", "The Corn God", "The Tumbler" and the two sonnets, of which here is the second, *Azrael:*

> When, with the twilight for his parachute,
> He visited the battlefields at dawn,
> In silken thunder dropped to count his loot,
> Blue to the lips and with a face of scorn:
> His smile was a white lightning-flash that lit
> The sprawling mechanism of men's bones;
> His laughter was a thunder-clap that split
> The ear-drums of the angels on their thrones.
> But when he saw how tranquilly decay
> Was breeding poppies in those empty eyes:
> That life from Death's blank sockets wriggled out
> And shivered in the loveliness of day:
> Seizing a rifle, with strange baffled cries,
> He put it to his brains and blew them out."

This could scarcely be bettered, but for the rhyming of 'dawn' with 'scorn'. There are other such faults and inequalities in the book, but they are the faults and inequalities which one would expect to find in such a poet as Mr. Lyle with his impetuous and generous sweep. These slight flaws are unimportant; what matters is that he has been impelled to write because he loves, because he is deeply moved by "the fury of the heart". It is precisely this affirmation which counts. If the verse which is rooted in negation survives, it will be as a commentary on an age of despair; only the poetry which has sprung from a burning belief will retain its true meaning for the generations yet to come.

P. D. Cummins.

The Singing Earth, by Douglas Gibson (Heinemann, 8s. 6d.).
Selected Poems, by Richard Eberhart (Chatto and Windus, 6s.).
The Hardest Freedom, by Sydney Tremayne (Collins, 6s.).
Our Lady's Tumbler, by Ronald Duncan (Faber, 8s. 6d.).

Gods With Stainless Ears, by Lynette Roberts (Faber, 8s. 6d.).
More Poems, by Eileen Duggan (Allen and Unwin, 7s. 6d.).
The Creation, by James Kirkup (The Lotus Press, 3s.).
Disorderly Poems, by E. P. B. Linstead (Duckworth, 5s.).
Quarto (No. 1), edited by James Reeves (The Friary Press, Dorchester, 9d.).
A Distant Star, by Charles Higham (The Hand and Flower Press, 1s.).

Those sometimes forgivable but seldom accurate puffs on the flaps of book-jackets are a constant source of irritation to the reviewer, and the more incorrect they are proved to be, the more strongly is he tempted to restore the balance by over-censuring the book. He usually resists this impulse, but the temptation is often considerable.

But, for once, I agree with a publisher's blurb, and believe its claims. Of *The Singing Earth,* Heinemann says "Douglas Gibson is one of the younger lyric poets whose work is attracting an increasing audience in this country on account of its simplicity and sensitivity." If this is not so, it certainly should be. The poems in this collection are quite delightful and, to me at any rate, show what poetry always has been and always will be. More, please!

I cannot say quite the same of Mr. Eberhart. An American, and an intellectual poet, too many of his poems bear the mark of severely controlled, if not non-existent, emotion. There are several exceptions which are pleasing enough, but much of his work lacks warmth and feeling, such necessary elements to true poetry. His poems do not benefit from their absence. But that he has the eye of the poet, few could deny.

Sydney Tremayne can also boast of the eye of the poet, but, again, between eye and tongue there is still too little collusion. Mr. Tremayne, it must be admitted, draws more from a mood or environment than do many poets; so much so that the wealth of his symbols and similes is at times quite bewildering. A profuse poet, yet one difficult to disregard.

Our Lady's Tumbler, the verse play first performed in Salisbury Cathedral last year, is now welcome in book form. Admirers of Mr. Duncan's *This Way to the Tomb* will want the text of this later play, whose audience was unavoidably so limited. It has the usual drawbacks of published play-scripts, of course, but it is useful as a source of reference and for comparison.

Splattered with Welsh and cerebrally guided to the point of sterility, Lynette Roberts' "heroic" exercise is excellent confirmation of her intention, as expressed in her preface, to "represent a period of muddled and intense thought which arose out of the first years of conflict." The publishers' blurb admits that it "is not an easy poem to grasp the meaning of", but finds it "astonishingly *readable*" (their emphasis). But even their later assurance of its quality of emotional communication didn't help me much (though I fumed with emotion on reading the author's boast

that she had "adapted" the villanelle. I wonder if she could adopt it?) Neither did the fourteen pages of notes with which the book concludes, aid appreciably.

Its tenor, in fact, is covered by two lines from Eileen Duggan's book:

Where are the words that broke the heart with beauty?
This is the age of the merely clever.

This rhetoric query should not be directed at its originator, since some of Eileen Duggan's poems are admirable. Unfortunately, few are moving. Her approach is rather humourless, and while poetry does not have to be one riot of fun, humour is a great aid to both perception and sympathy.

The Creation is emphatically not Mr. Kirkup at his best. This is not to say that he says nothing, but he could say it so much better—and more quickly. Mr. Kirkup can do much better, and often has. Was not that sympathetic and moving poem "The Blind Boy" his?

Outrageously priced though Mr. Linstead's pamphlet is, it provides a better five-shilling's worth than some publishers offer for double that sum. Mr. Linstead has a pleasant sense of humour, a command of words and the epigrammatic form, and, while this selection may not include any high poetry, it has some very good verse. One epigram *must* be quoted:

You see? It's sunset—just as I said.
Do you know how I guessed?
I saw a cloud going slightly red
—And Peter Scott, flying west.

Or *is* that an epigram? Perhaps it's just Mr. Linstead.

I thought broadsheets had died, but I am glad to be wrong. *Quarto* gives us Norman Cameron, Jack Dalglish, and poets of surprisingly varied moods and callings. Sixteen poems in all, on a single folded sheet nine inches by eleven.

An eye should be kept on Charles Higham. "Form" is still, perhaps, rather dominant over matter, but experience should elicit good things from this young poet.

JON WYNNE-TYSON.

SHAKESPEARIAN EMENDATIONS

By HOWARD PARSONS

Hamlet No. 2.

1, 3, 5. Laertes warns his sister, Ophelia (according to the Folio)—

For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favours,
Hold it a fashion and a toy in Bloud:—
Thinke it no more—
Perhaps he loves you now,

And now no soyle nor cautell doth besmerch
The vertue of his feare: but you must feare
His greatnesse weigh'd, his will is not his owne;
For hee himselfe is subject to his Birth:—
And therefore must his choyce be circumscrib'd
Unto the voyce and yeelding of that Body,
Whereof he is the Head.

Cautell (5th line) means fraud or deceit. In the Quartos, the italicized words appear as "The vertue of his *will*" and that is accepted without comment by Malone, Staunton, Knight, Cowden Clarke, Grant White, Verity and Prof. Dover Wilson. F. A. Marshall says "feare" was evidently caught by mistake from the end of the line.

Even supposing it were possible that Hamlet's *will* could be besmirched, it is impossible to imagine that the *virtue* of his will could be likewise defiled. Moreover, the virtue of his will was not in question; Laertes' point was that Hamlet's will was "not his own"; in marrying, he was limited to the choice "of that body whereof he is the head". The last thing Laertes intended was to give Hamlet a good character, so it is certain he did not say to the effect that Hamlet's will (intention) was irreproachable—but that sums up the meaning of the Quartos' version, which is thereby proved incorrect. Shakespeare wrote:

The virtue of his *fair.*

His fair means *his beloved,* as in Winter's Tale, IV, 4, 42, "Dearest Perdita, —I'll be thine, my fair". Shakespeare quibbled with *fair,* e.g., MND. I, 1, 182, "Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!" i.e., He loves your beauty: Oh fortunate beloved! and Romeo and J. Act II, Chorus, line 3, "That fair for which love groan'd for, and would die, With tender Juliet match'd is now not fair," i.e., That beloved person—is now not admired. The Folio mis-spelling "feare", could have been due either to mis-hearing or mis-reading, assisted in the latter case by "feare" being the last word in the line. "Perhaps he loves you now" means "he loves you now"; it is a grudging admission, in keeping with the phrase "the *trifling* of his favours." *Virtue* means *chastity,* as in Measure for M. III, 1, 164, "only he had made an assay of her virtue", so Laertes' full meaning is "He loves you now, and at present no stain or fraud doth defile the virtue of his beloved; but you must fear", etc.

1, 3, 62. Polonius, in his advice to his son, Laertes, says:

The friends thou hast, and their adoption tride,
Grapple them to thy Soule, with *hoopes of Steele:*

Malone says of the last three words, "The emendation '*hooks* of steel' was made by Mr. Pope, is strongly supported by the word *grapple,* viz., to grapple and to board a ship."—Cowden Clarke follows suit. Staunton mentions Pope's emendation but does not agree with it. Grant White, Verity and Professor Dover Wilson print *hoops* without comment. F. A.

Marshall quotes "*hooks* makes the figure suggested by *grapple* the very reverse of what Shakespeare intended; for *grappling* with hooks is the act of an enemy and not of a friend", and invites comparison with Macbeth, III, 1, 106. "Grapples you to the heart and love of us."

Pope was right. Shakespeare wrote "*hooks* of steel". Marshall's quotation is proved wrong by the line he offers in comparison, for *grappling for love* implies friendliness and not hate. Polonius said only seven lines earlier "Laertes, aboard, aboard, for shame! The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail," and it was with the sea still in mind that he used the word *grapple* metaphorically. Compare "*Grapple* your minds to sternage of this navy" (Henry V, Act III, Chorus). *Grapple* means "Holding vessels in engagement while boarding, *or in a more peaceable way* while loading, unloading or transferring cargo." (Lloyds Ency. Dic.). All these operations were performed by means of "hooks of steel", i.e., *grappling*-irons. Hamlet (III, 2, 69) equalled Polonius in his fervour for friendship—

> give me that man
> That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
> In my heart's core, ay in my heart of heart,
> As I do thee.

I, 3, 69. Polonius, in continuation of his advice to his son, says—

> Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy;
> But not exprest in fancie; rich, not gawdie:
> For the Apparell oft proclaimes the man,
> And they in France of the best ranck and station,
> Are of a most select and generous *chieff in that*.

Regarding the italicized words: Malone said that in heraldry "chief" signifies the upper part of the shield. He adds "If *chief* in this sense had not been familiarly understood, the editor of the Folio must have considered the line as unintelligible, and would have probably omitted the words 'of a' or attempted some other correction. This not having been done, I have adhered to the old copies." Cowden Clarke and F. A. Marshall adopt Rowe's reading "Are most select and generous chief in that". Staunton mentions Steevens' proposal "Select and generous, are *most choice* in that" but he himself thought "cheff" should be changed to *chief*. Prof. Dover Wilson says "Despite the agreement of Quartos 1 and 2 with the Folio as to the text, corruption is indisputable", also, that "Most editors omit 'of a', which may be a misprint for 'often'."

That the line is corrupt is evidenced by its not making sense, and by the surplus foot in the metre. It read originally—

> Are most select and generous *touching* that.

Touching was easily misheard as *chieff in*, as was "hooks of steel" (line 69) as "*hoops* of steel". Line 88, Polonius asks "What ist Ophelia he hath said to you?" and she replies "So please you, something *touching* the L. Hamlet.": thus, again, *touching* is used with the meaning of *concerning*.

Poetry

NORTH AMERICAN VOICES : III

In the last eight months we have received, and conserved to study for this feature, a number of offerings from the North American Continent. With our restricted space, we can only include our dozen favourite pieces; but we would like to make expression of our appreciation to all these so encouraging well-wishers by recording their names in our pages even if we were unable to publish work by more than a handful. Besides to our Twelve North American Muses, then, we proffer thanks to eleven residents of the United States, namely: Marc Boyer, Marden Dahlstedt, Clara Dawson, Wilson M. Hudson, Jeannine Kendall, James Boyer May, Annabelle Merrifield, Betty E. Nissen, Clarence Alva Powell, H. T. Douglas Robinson, Allen E. Woodall; as, also, to four residents of Canada: Helene Patricia Collacott, Jean Hart, Samuel Poznansky and L. Juliet Young. To all goes our gratitude—Editor, *The Poetry Review*.

★

IVORY TOWER

EVELYN SCOTT
(born Tennessee)

Blue moon, knocking at the window
And the open door;
Your surging, storming stillness
Written on the bare boards
Of my floor,
And on the garden
Where ailanthus trees are cowering and dark!—
As curse and chatter are flung inward
From the street,
Your holy threat spreads glacially
Among the blackened leaves
And through the empty park!
White beacon, shaking down this other light
From frozen space,
Upon our tinsel gauds—
Be yet my death-pure refuge!—
Lovely signal of creation's
Different and unchanging face!

ON SOME HONOURED PRETENDERS

STANTON A. COBLENTZ
(California)

Brightly although their laurels wave and glitter,
They cannot rise above their own base souls.
Wormwood and brine, though shown in golden bowls,
Remain forever bitter.

PORTRAIT OF A WAYFARER

LINCOLN FITZELL
(California)

Tom Phillips brushed the gems of dewy dawns
With sleeves so burred and stickered by the years
They wreathed a mist that sparkled up from lawns
To clash with sleep among the pasture spears.

Tom argued not with sunlight on the hill,
Nor forced the stony gulches patched with brush,
The right respected of dry grass to shrill
Disturbed him not nor earth's long, aimless hush.

He bore no winter ashes on his head,
Nor battered spring, nor beat the summer down,
Nor found the autumn shallow to his tread,
Who valued beauty whether bright or brown.

A SONG FOR TO-MORROW

BLANCHE ROBINSON WILLIAMS
(Virginia)

Weep not as Rachel wept
For songs that will not stir,
For lonely Nebo heights
Or cold dead juniper;
Nor for these widening fields
Of clover, vetch, and rye,
With the sunny corn drowsing
Beneath the dragon-fly.
Nor weep for the spawning fish
In the green and secret shade,

Thatched from a reddening sky,
Unconscious, unafraid.
But weep for the child of to-morrow
As he struggles against the loam,
To lift from a nation's error
The semblance of life and home.
Weep for his shattered dreams,
(With April skies unfurled)
And for his stricken song,
Lost in an alien world,
As he stares on cratered hills,
The ruin of rock and vine,
Mocked by the flowering ash
And the clean white strength of pine.

PORTRAIT IN SUNLIGHT

STELLANOVA OSBORN
(Georgia)

God forgive if I exalt you
Above your proper place
But I give the sun the glory
Of shining on your face!

WHISTLER'S MOTHER

HELEN G. JEFFERSON
(California)

The gown is her habitual black, the cap
Immaculately white and trimmed with lace.
She sits at ease, hands folded in her lap,
An inner calm reflected in her face.
She had known loss of sons and widow's grief,
But she had not rebelled, no bitterness
Had breached the citadel of her belief
That God is loving, just, and quick to bless.
She has a double immortality:
Eternal life victorious faith had won
And earthly fame that keeps her memory
Alive in portrait painted by her son.
Her Sabbath peace reveals that she was good,
Fit symbol of the noblest motherhood.

SORROW

MARIE TELLO PHILLIPS
(Pennsylvania)

To all the glorious Spring,
  Sorrow leaves me blind.
I was wont to sing,
  But song is hard to find
  When loss and loneliness are portals of the mind.

Hope and joy have fled,
  Left but memory.
Beauty offers bread,
  Flat and stale to me
  And salted by my tears for what can never be.

Sorrow makes me dumb,
  I must try to pray.
Though my heart be numb,
  I must live to-day
  And find my solace following the Saviour's way.

UNITED NATIONS SOLDIER

(Lieutenant William Kempen, U.S. 32nd Infantry, killed in action in Korea, 28th November, 1950.)

The Late EVERARD STOKES*
(New Jersey)

His frosted breath ebbed on Korean hill.
Frozen he lay—rigid as West Point Drill.
Deep is my sorrow. Its profounder vaults
Hide in their depths no treasury of tears.
So does my feeling reel to the abyss
Whose granite walls seem precipice of years.
"He ate his turkey on Thanksgiving Day
With musket on his knees, the Pilgrim way,"
He wrote his wife—my daughter—cheerily—
Who read it with his child upon her knee,
So close to one unborn he'll never see.

* *The Poetry Review* was deeply grieved to learn of the author's death in a tragic train-wreck at Woodbridge, New Jersey, on February 6th, 1951, and extends sincere sympathy to his doubly bereaved family in its own, and the Poetry Society's name. Everard Stokes' last book, *The Bubble Womb*, will shortly be reviewed.—*Editor.*

SONNET FOR SPRING

DENNY LARKE
(Michigan)

We did not know that life is not eternal,
When, breast to breast, we lay in spiring grass.
We did not know that love is not immortal—
We did not know that our spring world would pass.
But our spring world was leaves volplaning brightly,
And our spring world was June's asthenic rain;
And our wild love was weak reeds waving sprightly
Before a gale they could not long sustain.

This night I lie alone 'neath wilted blossoms,
And dreams of love warm not my breathless sleep.
Stiff fingers have forgotten ample bosoms,
Grey lips curl not in vows man may not keep.
Above my grave I hear the Wind Bards sing
The lies of love, the green deceits of spring.

PROTEST

SANFORD ALLEN McGAVERN
(Virginia)

Beaten to the earth I fall
Prone beneath the skies.
Victim of this sorry scheme
With its stealth and lies.
But to prove that life is more
Than the Fates surmise,
With a grip on Truth and God
Reeling up, I rise.

CREATIVE

MARGARET LOUISE POTTER
(Nova Scotia)

I traced you with my finger tips
When you weren't knowing.
My mind's lean fingers touched the fibre of
Your silences. My fingers traced your lips.

A soft wind blowing
You thought my touch to be; but love it was.
I crept my presence softly on your eyes,
Still, still as water in an imprisoned pool.
You let me press them to your white brow; sighs
Of Summer breezes, thought you, O, so cool . . .
I ran excited fingers of the mind
All through your hair to disarrange the dark
Dark Beauty, till my reach could find
The image that has brought you to my heart.
I traced with odd instinctive art
To find what brings you to my heart,
More than your beauty, and more kind —
The finer features of the mind.

AT MILTON'S COTTAGE, CHALFONT ST. GILES

VIVIAN L. VIRTUE
(Jamaica)

An unpretentious plot of cottage ground
Glad with the Summer laughter of its phlox,
Where now like blowsy girls tall hollyhocks
Reach at low apple boughs, this was the bound
Of Paradise; for here dark Milton found
That overwhelming radiance which mocks
Our meaner sight, the measure which unlocks
Both Heaven and hell with its immortal sound.
Upon this hearth infernal fires have been,
Where Lucifer in shining treason fell;
Came to the ceiling low, the lattice dim,
Beelzebub and faithful Abdiel.
And heavy forth beyond the garden rim
Two lingering went, clothed in the primal sin.

★

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

Some months ago I thought Mr. Peter Russell's strictures on Miss Editha M. Kelly's *Wind on the Heath* severe and a shade pontifical.

But now meseems the lady herself protesteth overmuch, so I decided to look for myself into her volume. It struck me as, frankly, very poor poetry indeed, and Mr. Russell's castigation not unwarranted. What after all did he say? That "she shows a sense of form" but "her lyrical poems are rather given to poetical *clichés* and her attempts at satirical verse, where significantly she abandons any regular form, sink into mediocre prose"—suggesting comparison of her *Critics* with Pound's *Mr. Nixon* "to see how outmoded and weak a piece of writing hers is."

Let us look at the gravamen of the charge: what of the *Critics*?

"High sounding words and involved phrases
Incomprehensible even to themselves,
Jargon of grooved minds
Shattering blasts of destructive criticism
Or wordy pœans of praise" . . .

[False erudition; Paian, the physician of the gods never had an O, nothing to do with poietes the poet!]

. . . "Intensely satisfying to the writers,
Basking in adulation of the few . . ."

"Outmoded" is surely the word for this vein worked out so long ago?

In Satirical Vein contains another effusion called Sincerity.

It begins "Humility is a virtue" but one which the writer rejects—"Pride is the besetting sin of many a so-called poet who . . . produced a meaningless jumble of strange words, haphazardly plucked from the dictionary . . . calling it MODERN VERSE" . . . This (chopped up into lines, of course) struck me as almost too easy; but I felt it was the lady herself voiced in the final stanza, beginning

"For I was born
With the breath of poetry animating my being
And a love of Truth and Beauty burning fiercely within,"
to end in I am sure all her titled Sincerity
"Firmly I set my feet upon the rungs
of the unscaled
Heights."

Where you, Mr. Editor, and I will leave them, both the feet and the rungs of the Heights.

I am, etc.,

ARTHUR VIVIAN.

PREMIUM COMPETITION REPORT

(New Series: No. 7)

Of the sixty-four entries to the Competition which closed on June 15th, I unhesitatingly select Mrs. Katherine Falk's distinguished *The Lost Image* as the winner. This is no implied criticism of the truly admirable and various qualities exhibited by her eight warmest contestants. It is merely the expression of an opinion that her poem seemed to stand alone, though not willingly aloof, in some very excellent company.

JOHN GAWSWORTH.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Pamela Cleaver, Kensington.
A. E. Dodd, Stoke-on-Trent.
Margaret C. Gibbons, Edmonton.
Edmund Hughes, Glamorganshire.
Leonard Kendall, Essex.
Jean Kenward, Herts.
Dorothy Spring, Sheffield.
Philip A. Stalker, Edinburgh.

THE LOST IMAGE

This is the story of a dream
Wherein the landscape drifting by
Was stilled, and slowly gathered power
Until the dreamer recognised
The heights and deeps that Wordsworth knew,
And seemed to be compelled to find
The poet's monument among
These mountains of the dreaming mind.

He set forth through a summer world
First looking for a man of green
Who stood beneath a tall oak tree,
In green disguise all overgrown
With moss; but though he travelled far
He never found the man of green:
The oak tree stood alone.

"And then the dream to autumn turned
And now the man was bronze—I seemed
To see him seated near a pool
Surrounded by a screen of alder;
But through the leaves no man was there,
Only the pool's eye meeting mine
Shone dark beneath a boulder.

And so the winter followed on,
The last hope was a man of stone
By now with cap of thickest snow
And snow about him for a shawl;
Through all the vacant fell I searched
The snow lay on a low stone wall.

So died the day; it was the end;
And then I knew that men had failed
To praise, I knew the time was spent;
While in the gloom those three drew near
The oak, the pool, the wall of stone,
And through the mist I heard them chant
'We are his monument'."

KATHERINE FALK.

POEMS OF PLACE COMPETITION, 1951

Among the large number of entries for the Poems of Place Competition, 1951, I find few of outstanding merit; indeed, there is much verse of a banal character, but little poetry. A "Poem of Place" like a good actor, or any good artist, should make its subject *live*. Alas, so many of the efforts submitted were less than "dry bones" lacking all but laboured description, and flowery phrases which might well apply to any, but to no particular place.

There seems little to choose between the merits of the two winners, who share the prize, Margaret Gregson with *Nightfall in Kenya*, and G. J. Blundell with *Box Hill*. The stark imagery of the former poem grips the imagination and surrounds us, as it were, with a strange but hitherto unexperienced glimpse of Nature, real and alive.

Box Hill by G. J. Blundell, with its vivid imagery and clever personification shows a well-known beauty spot, from a new and somewhat refreshing angle. It is Box Hill that only a poet's eye can envisage.

Among those commended we have a sonnet, *Night Scene in Pittsburgh*, a good effort weakened by a "do" in the third line that a little careful polishing could have remedied. Also an amazing feat of condensation in *Rocky Mountains, U.S.A.* by J. R. de Spain, a clever poem of many places in very few words.

F. J. R. MASON.

COMMENDED

C. F. Carr.
Marden Dahlstedt.
Jay Roderic de Spain.
Robert James.
Phil Leverington.
Mabel Parker.
Greta Rowell.
I. M. Saunders.

THE HOWARD PARSONS EPIGRAM COMPETITION

The apotheosis of the epigram is surely and cannibalistically its definition within epigrammatic limits. Perhaps the couplet of Samuel Taylor Coleridge contains the neatest and most polite definition:

"What is an Epigram? a dwarfish whole,
Its body brevity, and wit its soul."

The severity of the Greek model, originally evolved for monumental inscription, seldom contained the subtlety and irony of wit of later years.

Nowadays, the antithetical "point" or the "sting in the tail" is more appreciated than the compression of thought or turn of phrase.

The "literary" epigram, of which there were many, laboriously constructed, requires an effort to memorise, and is not readily appreciated when quoted.

Two excellent couplets may be quoted as characterising other entries:

Justin Richardson's, "For the Record":

His epigrams are not his own
The man's an epigramaphone.

and *Miriam S. S. Foote's* "Incorrigible":

No verse on earth is sacred in his eyes
And even in Paradise he'll parodize.

The subject favoured by many entries was satirised in a couplet by *Elsie M. Gittens:*

"A Wedding," he said, erect of carriage,
"Is enough to ruin any marriage."

I must mention also, "The Women's Club" by *M. Trench:*

Inside the snake-pit forked tongues dart
As serpents have a "heart-to-heart",
Injected venoms creep and spread
Throughvictims who are good as dead.

I confess to a preference forthe immediate shock, even if it is deliciously à outrance.

I cannot refrain therefore from awarding the first prize to Mr. Arthur Osborne.

JOHN GRADDON.

If Freud, God rest his soul, was right,
And love is but an appetite,
Let lust and gluttony join forces
In intercourse between the courses.

ARTHUR OSBORNE.

The second and third prizes are given in that order:

TRANSMIGRATION

Sleek and green-eyed Helen lured the sails
Of twice-five hundred ships manned by Greek males.
In my Persian puss she still prevails,
And what a sea there is of constant tails!

MARGARET MURRAY.

ON A FAMOUS CONDUCTOR

So soft is X's pianissimo,
The uninitiate get up and go;
But X has his revenge on them, no doubt:
His forte strikes them dead as they walk out.

DOROTHY SPRING.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN : POETRY SOCIETY READINGS

The last of six Special Readings to Commemorate the Festival of Britain, produced under the auspices of The Poetry Society at Herringham Hall, Bedford College, will be held at 3 p.m. on Sunday, 7th October, *Modern Poetry*.

Tickets are obtainable (2/- Reading for non-members, 1/- for members) from the Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, W.1.

(*Herringham Hall, Bedford College, is a few minutes' walk from York Gate, the first entrance to Regent's Park past Baker Street Station. The hall is at the rear of the main building of Bedford College.*)

FORTY-SECOND ANNUAL GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Annual General Business Meeting of the Poetry Society was held at 33, Portman Square, W.1, on 30th May, 1951.

Apologies for non-attendance from Miss R. Cohen, Mr. Thomas Moult and Mr. William Kean Seymour were received.

The Minutes of the previous meeting which had been printed in the July/August issue of *The Poetry Review* were confirmed and signed as correct.

The President reading his report said, "It is usual for the Chairman of a Company at the Annual General Meeting of shareholders to paint a rosy and glowing picture of the past year's achievements and the coming year's expectations. It is not my intention to give you any such display this afternoon, but to tell you as briefly as possible the facts about last year's work, leaving the Financial Gazette to your Hon. Treasurer. I am sorry to say that the tendency still is for membership to decline; that is the lapses cancel the new members. We feel that this decline must be stayed if the Society is to remain healthy. We believe that we have still only touched the fringe of possible membership in this country. In this belief your Council last July decided to embark on a vigorous advertising campaign and to employ the services of an expert in this field. Mr. Robert Brandon, of Robert Brandon and Partners Ltd., was appointed our agent in this respect and a variety of activities ensued: advertisements were placed in various selected periodicals, a new cover for *The Poetry Review* was designed, letters were sent out to poets whose work appeared in various periodicals, a leaflet called a "Centre for Poetry" was designed, a public relations officer was appointed, a history of The Poetry Society was circulated to the press and so on. Over two hundred pounds has been spent on these projects and as in the case with all general advertising it is difficult to say if and when a sufficient return has been obtained. One never knows, here as in any other business, what the position would have been had the advertising campaign not been launched. I feel that we must above all expand our membership; but this question of advertising is one on which I should particularly like to have the opinion of members.

"The appointment of an advertising agent has not blunted our own activities. The Society has begun to publish again and has produced this year a number of Broadsheets of Members' poems; they seem to me to be good productions, and I expect most of you have seen them. About two hundred and fifty have been sold so far. We owe this enterprise to the initiative and keenness of the Hon. Treasurer.

"Our Friday Readings have been well attended and the meetings for general discussion and exchange of ideas, now held after each reading have proved popular. We have experimented with new types of meeting based on audience participation, like the "Any Questions" meetings. We have initiated a series of readings for Children, the first of which was arranged by Miss Lesley Deane and Mr. Tom Foley. The next is on Saturday, 16th June, when "Birds, Beasts, Fishes, Insects and Reptiles" will be on the bill: and

I specially note Dr. Leigh Henry's work to these very successful meetings. We are giving a special series of Festival Readings on Sunday afternoons (first in each month) at the Herringham Hall, Bedford College. The next is on 3rd June, when Lesley Deane and Clifford Turner will give a reading of the Caroline Poets. We have revived the readings at the Royal Chapel of the Savoy, Mondays, third in each month, 12.30 to 1.30 p.m.; the next is on 18th June, when Mr. Charles Doran will give a reading of Milton.

"We have tried, but in vain, to co-operate with the Arts Council and with the B.B.C. Not very much loss perhaps, if we succeeded our individuality might be the price. I propose to publish in the Review my correspondence with the Director of Home Programmes.

"A panel of lecturers has been formed or is in process of formation. New Centres have been opened at Bath and at Hove. The usual Tea Meeting for Centres was held on 30th September and was notable for the admirable talk on poetry which Mr. L. A. G. Strong gave us. The Society has succeeded in securing exemption from the payment of Entertainments tax. And the Re-drafting of the Constitution has now been completed; if and when the revised draft is approved by your new Council, a special meeting of members will be called to consider it. We sustained a very grievous loss a short time ago in the death of Mr. Grant, for so long a member of the General Council and one of our most devoted workers for the Society. He is greatly missed, and particularly in the Library to which he gave so much of his time for so many years. We realise that it will not be easy to replace him, and we are grateful to Mr. Burbury who has undertaken to look after this important side of our activities. You know that we have here one of the finest libraries of poetry in the world. We housed for years the Italian Library of the Dante Society; but that has now been handed over to the Italian Society.

"Probably the most important single development in the Society this year has been the formation of the Junior Membership Group which has been inaugurated to bring younger members of the community into the Poetry Society and to give them their own magazine, *The Voice of Youth*. The response to this has been most enthusiastic and we already have over one hundred and fifty members at 5/- each and the number is steadily growing. The first number of *The Voice of Youth* won, deservedly I think, golden opinions on all sides, and I will read you one of many letters received from members in this respect. I can praise this venture unreservedly for I have had no hand in it; the whole scheme and its undoubted success derives from the energy and enthusiasm of Mr. Graddon to whom our warmest thanks are due.

"I come lastly to the Auditions which have proved as usual the financial anchor of the Society. A vast quantity of good work was put in by our examiners in this field and we are very grateful to them and owe a deal to their constant and well deserved popularity in the schools. I would also pay a tribute here to Miss Cracroft who looks after the clerical and domestic side of these activities with such unflagging patience and zeal.

"You have heard a brief statement of our doings for the year. Remember that all this work is initiated and directed by people who are giving time without any other reward than the work; but time becomes harder and harder to give as the pressure of the outside world and our necessary activities becomes every day more strenuous. I thank particularly the various members of sub-committees who have given so much of their time so willingly and so freely and without whose sacrifice this Society could not function."

The Hon. Treasurer then read the Financial Report, which had been distributed, together with a copy of the Balance Sheet and formally presented the Statement of Accounts up to December, 1950. He pointed out that on the ordinary functional activities of the Society, which included an expenditure of £207 5s. 3d. on special advertising activities, resulted in an excess of Income over Expenditure of £581 10s. 7d. He regretted to report the continued decline in membership which showed a decrease of £244 5s. 3d. compared with the previous year. He also reported that the net loss on *The Poetry Review* had been reduced by £143. He drew attention to the fact that the Auditions continued

to be the main source of revenue for the Society and that the income for 1950 was the highest ever recorded. He said this splendid result reflects the greatest credit on the staff and the general body of examiners. It was obvious that their experience and integrity of judgement was accepted unquestionably.

He felt that in view of the rising cost of repairs it seemed wise to put aside a further £100 to the reserve for dilapidations. He said that he had mentioned the staff in connection with Auditions, but their work and loyalty to the Society in every direction remained unsurpassed. He said that the Society was indeed fortunate and he would willingly pay this slight tribute to the immense help they had given him at all times.

Relating to the Hon. Treasurer's Report, various suggestions were put forward by members regarding the expansion of interest in the Readings and these were passed to the General Council for consideration.

The President then rose again and moved the adoption of the accounts for the year ending 31st December, 1950. This was carried unanimously with an expression of gratitude to the Hon. Treasurer for his untiring work on behalf of the Society.

In proposing the appointment of the firm of Messrs. Godwin and Taylor as auditors for the coming year for a fee of seventy guineas he spoke of their unfailing surveillance in the affairs of the Society. The motion was seconded by Mr. Armstrong and carried unanimously.

The motion by Mr. A. V. Burbury was put to the Meeting and amended as follows: "That the members of the Poetry Society do resolve and declare that they will each make serious and earnest effort and undertake to enlist if at all possible at least one member in the course of this new year." This was seconded by Mrs. Florence Moore and carried.

On the proposal of the President it was agreed to limit the number of members to be elected to the General Council to twenty. A card vote was taken and the papers handed to the Auditors of the Society for counting and checking. In due course the President announced the result of the election.

A vote of thanks to the President, Hon. Treasurer, and outgoing Council for their work on behalf of the Society was moved by Miss Odette Tchernine and warmly applauded.

CENTRES

THE BATH POETRY CLUB

Enquiries to: James Angell, Esq., Bedwyn, Westbury Avenue, Combe Down, Bath, Somerset.

THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. T. Weston Ramsey, 89 Poplar Avenue, Hove.

Fixtures every third Saturday in the month at the Glenside Hotel, 65 Grand Parade, Brighton. Readings at 4-30 until 6 p.m. (and it is hoped to start a Children's Section from 3 p.m. until 4 p.m., previous to the Adult Meeting). Tudor Café attached Refreshments if desired.

The annual general business meeting of this Centre was held at the "Glenside Hotel" Brighton, on Saturday, 16th June; with Mr. T. W. Ramsey in the chair.

The following appointments of officers were made: President of Centre: The Rev. F. Pratt Green, of the Dome Mission, Brighton; Honorary Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. T. Weston Ramsey, 89 Poplar Avenue, Hove, 4, Sussex; Representative of the Centre on the General Council: The Rev. F. Pratt Green.

No Committee was elected, but it was agreed to confer on the President and the Honorary Secretary of the Centre the right to co-opt such a Committee as and when necessary.

THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE CENTRE

8th September, 3 p.m.—Poems on or for children. Mrs. F. Dillon-Edwards, Faulkners, Chesham Bois. Amersham 1121.

13th October, 3 p.m.—Reading by members of a play to be chosen. Mrs. E. Van den Bergh, Beacon View, Penn. 3274.

27th October, 3 p.m.—Annual General Meeting. Mrs. E. Van den Bergh, Beacon View, Penn. 3274.

THE CHELSEA POETRY CIRCLE

(Affiliated to the Poetry Society)

President: Dame Sybil Thorndike.

Vice-President: Miss Margaret Rawlings.

On Sunday, 17th June, the Circle had the pleasure of welcoming their Vice-President, Miss Margaret Rawlings for a reading from Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The lovely Music Room at 3 Cheyne Walk made an appropriate setting for this most enjoyable occasion.

Details of Meetings can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, John E. Carroll, 5 Redesdale Street, Chelsea. S.W.3.

THE EALING CENTRE

President: Mary Giles, 36 Kitchener Road, High Wycombe.

There were more than 100 entrants for the verse speaking competition arranged by this Centre of the Poetry Society, the finals of which were at the Nelson Room, Ealing Town Hall, on Thursday, 12th July.

Spectators and onlookers alike came from the West Middlesex area.

It was hoped that so successful a venture would be repeated next year.

Adjudicators were: Miss Grace Seppings, L.R.A.M. (Eloc.), L.G.S.M. (Eloc.), A.L.A.M. (Eloc.), Examiner at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, and Mr. George Wood, B.A., L.R.A.M. (Eloc.).

Enquiries about the Ealing Centre of the Poetry Society should be addressed to the Secretary, 3 Grafton Road, Acton, W.3.

THE GUILDFORD POETRY CENTRE

Details of meetings may be obtained from The Centre Secretary, Mrs. F. E. Coker, 20 Litchfield Way, Guildford, Surrey.

This Centre opened its Festival Programme at the June meeting with a recital given by Miss Roberta Shuttleworth, assisted by a student of hers, Francine Holton.

This recital being the Centre's special Festival effort, interesting reference was made to plays in verse which had brought poetry anew to the minds of the people.

It was an outstanding recital and it was felt that the audience thoroughly enjoyed it.

THE HAMPSTEAD POETRY CENTRE (1909)

Meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays in each month at 8—9-30 p.m., at 9 Wentworth Mansions, Keats Grove, N.W.3.

THE LEWES POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the Secretary and Treasurer: G. C. Price, 22 Sutton Road, Seaford, Sussex.

The Centre reports an interesting and successful season. Meetings have been held in the Friends' Meeting House, Lewes, where next season's gatherings, commencing early in the Autumn, will also assemble.

J. R. Clemo
THE CLAY VERGE
4s. 6d.

Isaac Rosenburg
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Richard Eberhart
SELECTED POEMS
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THE MANCHESTER POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the Secretary: Mrs. B. Sterling, 25 June Street, Manchester, 13. Meetings are held at the Midland Hotel, the third Wednesday in each month at 6-30 p.m.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss H. Haddock, 18 Ashley Gardens, Belfast.
15th October—*Shakespeare wasn't a boy*. Talk by Dr. D. Frazer-Hurst.

THE NOTTINGHAM POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: Lake Aske, Esq., 281 Wilford Lane, Nottingham.

THE REIGATE POETRY CENTRE

Details of Meetings may be obtained from the Centre Secretary, Mrs. M. A. Hicks, The Alton, Alma Road, Reigate.

SHEFFIELD POETRY CLUB

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss F. G. Stimpson, 23 Silver Hill Road, Sheffield, 11.

THE SOUTHAMPTON POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss Joy Brider, 9 Archers Road, Southampton.

THE STROUD CENTRE

For particulars of Membership, please apply to the Hon. Secretary of the Stroud Poetry Centre at Steanbridge, Slad, Nr. Stroud.

THE WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: Mrs. Elsie M. Gittens, 28 Oatlands Drive, Weybridge, Surrey.

On 21st June a most enjoyable evening was spent when Justin Richardson, of *Punch*, read his "Back Room Joys".

Meetings are held at 28 Oatlands Drive, Weybridge near Walton Bridge, the fourth Thursday in each month at 8 p.m. Next meeting 20th September. All interested are welcome.

Will anyone able and willing to start a Centre in any part of the country please communicate with the Secretary, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1.

POETS' GROUP OF THE POETRY SOCIETY

This Group, dedicated to furthering the work of active Poets within the Society, gathers "to hear each other's work and discuss the spirit and substance of poetry." All interested in attending future meetings are invited to communicate with me at The Well House, Ewell, Surrey. LEIGH HENRY.

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S CRITICAL SERVICE

The Poetry Society has pleasure in announcing the continuance of its Critical Service for Members. Two poems only may be submitted for criticism, for a minimum fee of 5s.

Hutchinson's

THE MONARCH OF WIT

J. B. Leishman

"Outlines the principal events of Donne's life, discusses the value of the term 'metaphysical poetry', deals in turn with each of the principal categories of Donne's poems, and analyses some of the reasons which have been adduced for admiring or censuring his work . . . May be strongly recommended."

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HEINEMANN

The charge for the criticism of each additional poem is 2s. It is particularly requested that all poems submitted should be typed and that a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed.

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S AUDITIONS AND EXAMINATIONS

The Poetry Society has conducted auditions and examinations in the art of verse-speaking for many years, and its success in this valuable cultural activity is attested by the fact that the number of schools and institutions in all parts of England which the Society examines, continually increases.

Junior preliminary examinations are available for the youngest children and these continue through various grades, up to the final test for adult students, for which the Society's gold medal is the final award for success.

General regulations governing these auditions may be obtained on application to The Registrar, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, with whom arrangements can be made for auditions for schools, colleges, or private individuals.

COMPETITIONS

THE GREENWOOD COMPETITIONS FOR 1951

The Poetry Society is empowered by the executors of the late Mrs. Julia Wickham Greenwood to offer the sum of £20 as the Shirley Carter Greenwood Prize for the best single poem in open competition.

Entries should be addressed "The Greenwood Prize", 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Only one poem may be submitted by any one competitor, the length not to exceed 250 lines; no previously published poem may be entered. The full name and address of the author must be given and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed if return of the poem is desired. If a nom-de-plume is adopted, name and address of sender must be given in a closed envelope bearing the pseudonym. The winning poem will be printed in *The Poetry Review* and may be reprinted at the discretion of the Editor, who may also reserve near winners for publication in *The Poetry Review*.

Closing date is 31st December, 1951.

THE PREMIUM COMPETITION

The above bi-monthly competition continues as before with the total entrance fees as prize money which may be won outright by a single competitor or may be divided at the discretion of the Premium Adjudicator. An entrance fee of 2s. 6d. will be charged, and a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed if a receipt is desired. Competitors must observe the following rules:

1. One poem only may be entered by each competitor.
2. The poem must be typed and no stamped addressed envelope will be required unless a receipt is desired. (See Rule 3.)
3. Competitors must retain copies of their poems, as none can be returned.
4. Entries must be addressed "Premium Competition", *The Poetry Review*, 33 Portman Square, W.1.
5. Each poem must bear the author's name and address.
6. Entrants must be members of the Poetry Society or regular subscribers to *The Poetry Review*.
7. The winner of a full Premium or one who has shared the prize twice will not be eligible for re-entry for twelve months.
8. No previously published poem may be entered.

The closing date for the next Premium Competition will be 15th October, 1951.

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THE HOWARD PARSONS' EPIGRAM COMPETITION: 1952

The Poetry Society is empowered by Mr. Howard Parsons, a long-standing member of the Society, to offer the following prizes, endowed by him for an Epigram Competition.

1st prize, 5 guineas; 2nd prize, 2 guineas; 3rd prize, 1 guinea. Entries which should not have been previously published should be marked "Epigram" and should not bear a stamped addressed envelope. as MSS. cannot be returned. They should be addressed to The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, to reach here not later than 1st March, 1952. The Society reserves the right to extend the closing date of the competition should none of the entries reach the required standard.

SUBMISSIONS TO THE EDITOR

Manuscripts may be submitted to the Editor, THE POETRY REVIEW, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, for consideration in the ordinary way apart from entries for competitions. Such MSS. should be typewritten, or if this is impossible, printed legibly, and if their return is desired must be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope. The Editor can accept no responsibility for the safety of MSS. although every care will be taken to ensure this. Acceptance will not imply immediate publication; payment will be made upon publication.

THE POETRY SOCIETY : JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP

Every boy and girl under eighteen years of age is now entitled to become a Junior Member of the Poetry Society.

Every junior member will enjoy the privileges of an ordinary member but, instead of *The Poetry Review,* will receive each quarter, post free, a special magazine called *The Voice of Youth.*

The Poetry Society is the largest fellowship of poetry lovers in the world and, for over forty years. has played a great part in maintaining the strength and purity of this our English heritage.

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